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BRITAIN'S ROLE IN EUROPE

When the statesmen of the last generation assembled at Versailles they had to frame a Peace Treaty, and to tack on to it a constitution for the League. On these tasks much preliminary work had been done; the major issues had been canvassed in the press; and on the agenda and proceedings, apart from "closed" sessions, the limelight of publicity shone informatively. The contrast between Versailles and Sans Souci is in this respect startling. Even at San Francisco the debates on the structure of the United Nations Organisation were fully, and on the whole intelligently, publicised. The Big Three (on whose continued agreement our life depends) are met in a conclave so hedged with "security silence" that the newspapermen outside the ring of sentries can find nothing to report except irritating details of the Conference's luxurious commissariat, not forgetting the lawn-mowers imported by air. The statesmen's discussions have not been the subject of joint preparatory work by their technical advisers; and the agenda is apparently only being fixed after the opening of the proceedings. We know that this is *not* a Peace Conference—and that is almost all the public does know.

Since the means which must be adopted to defeat Japan are a major preoccupation of the United States, Mr. Truman will doubtless take this opportunity of discussing with Marshal Stalin the Far Eastern policy of the U.S.S.R. A military accord is possible; but is there any approach towards uniformity of Big Three policy in the larger terms of the future of China and the security of the Pacific? On the nature of the recent conversations between the Marshal and Mr. T. V. Soong there is a complete black-out. Nor do we know what demands have been made by the U.S.S.R. to safeguard her interest in free access between the Black Sea and Mediterranean. Will the Big Three discuss the Montreux Convention and the problems presented by the Middle East states adjacent to Turkey, with the additional complication of the urgent question of deciding whether further Jewish immigration into Palestine shall be sanctioned? Here again the veil of silence is broken only by rumour and conjecture. The status of Italy, relations between the Western Allies and Yugoslavia, the growing tension over frontiers in Macedonia, the drift towards civil war in Greece—all these problems clamour at San Souci's doors, behind which the statesmen are settling the fate of anxious peoples by methods of personal and secret diplomacy.

One assertion, however, may be safely made. The test of the Conference will be its ability to settle a question which cannot be shelved—the economic and political future of Europe, dependent (as it is) on immediate determinations affecting Germany. Here Mr. Truman's line of approach is bound to reflect American opinion a trifle "West of Centre." His brief will be, on the one hand, to insist that Germany shall never again be the occasion for the shedding of American blood in Europe: even at the cost of "pastoralisation," the Reich must be rendered innocuous—and quickly, so that "the boys" may be brought home or re-deployed in the Pacific. On the other hand, the American attitude to Europe still remains true to Wilsonian conceptions of democracy: there must be freedom of the press, freedom for political association, freedom for private initiative (fostered, though doubtless with greater discretion than in the '20s, by American finance capital) to "put things right." In short, the tendency of U.S. policy, already visible in Military Government in General Eisenhower's zone, will be to favour the restoration of a sort of Weimar Germany, with the political influence of the Catholic Centre coagulating a revived capitalist economy.

Marshal Stalin, too, has his brief. For him the prime essential is to secure for his devastated country the maximum of reparations in kind. An Austrian Social-Democrat claiming to represent Dr. Renner has deplored the extent to which requisitioning and removal of machinery, fuel and clothing stocks from Austria is being carried out by the Commissar for Prizes of War. It is not clear whether this applies to Austrian, or only to German, property in Austria; but that a process of "stripping" is in train in Russian-occupied Germany we have no doubt. But, side by side with this determination to make the vanquished repair damage done, even if the result be acute short-term derangement of Central European economy, there are clear signs that the Russians know that only by State planning is there any hope of rebuilding society in war-devastated countries, and that for successful State control there must be autonomous governments supported by real political parties. Theirs is not the American conception of democratic freedom; all parties save the Communist, the Socialist and varying versions of a Catholic-Agrarian Centre are banned, and loyalty to the U.S.S.R.'s security is obviously a condition precedent to governmental autonomy. But at least the Russians seem disposed, conditionally, to give the nations in their sphere of influence a chance to make things work; and they will say, with truth, that in a shattered Europe the American idea of "putting things back to normal" will not work at all.

With the dangers involved in disagreement over Germany, and the need for a positive British policy, we deal in a leading article. But Mr. Churchill's responsibility extends to more than the German problem. The moral strength of his position at the Conference is that he can speak, if he will, not only for England but for Europe as a whole. If he elects to manœuvre, and to back Mr. Truman's general line of Wilsonian liberalism in the hope of securing American financial aid and American support for British intervention on behalf of discredited persons and parties in Eastern Europe, he will court disaster. Not only will he fail to convince the Russians (as he might legitimately try to do) of the virtues of a more humane policy in relation to mass-expulsions; the last hopes of genuine Three-Power collaboration will vanish, and with them every chance of restoring economic health and social decency for this generation of Europeans. In that event, whatever else it might decide to do, the Conference would have failed. And failure would mean much less to the two autarkic land-masses, with whose spokesmen Mr. Churchill has to deal, than to Britain. Economically, politically and culturally, Britain (like France) is an integral part of Western Europe. On its planned reconstruction our standard of life depends. If he speaks at Potsdam as a European, the Prime Minister will most truly be speaking for his own country.

Peace Terms for Italy ?

Italy's declaration of war on Japan, coupled with her offer to take an active part in the Far East war, is a move designed to secure American backing for her claim to be given the status of "Ally." If that were conceded, a Peace Treaty between Italy and the victorious Powers (including France) would have to be concluded : armistice relations may serve for a "co-belligerent," but scarcely for an Ally eligible for membership of the United Nations. Will peace terms for Italy be discussed at Potsdam ? In past exchanges of views with the State Department, the Foreign Office is believed to have suggested that Italy should be required to cede all her African possessions except Tripoli ; that Cyrenaica should become an Arab State ; and that Eritrea and Italian Somaliland should be partitioned—the ports to be held by Britain on a "trusteeship" basis, and the interior to go to Abyssinia. These would be unpalatable conditions for Italy, though many (perhaps most) Italians have probably reconciled themselves to the idea that the overseas Empire must be "written off." More serious difficulty is likely to arise over the future frontiers of metropolitan Italy. The view appears to be held in Whitehall that the eventual ownership of the Sud-Tyrol and Venezia Giulia cannot be determined until the happy day arrives when "Europe has settled down." Russian reactions to this conception are unknown. They may agree that there is a case for avoiding hasty decisions ; but what about the Oder-Neisse frontier ? And could a Peace Treaty contain a protocol requiring one signatory to comply, if required, with undetermined future curtailments of its territory ? The American attitude, which from the outset has favoured a generous treatment of Italy, is largely influenced by hopes of developing commercial relations with a "reliable" Italian Government.

Mass Expulsions of Germans

Scanty as it is, news from Prague indicates that the mass expulsion of all Sudeten Germans has been checked by Dr. Benes, who recently assured Reuter's correspondent that the movements of population will be carried out in an orderly way. Many Sudetens are apparently living in former Wehrmacht camps, and are employed in labour reconstruction companies. But the Czechoslovak Government is still determined to expel the vast majority of them, and those who are permitted to stay will not enjoy the privileges of a German minority with its own schools and cultural institutions. Much more serious is the position of the Germans in Polish territory. A vast number fled from their homes during the Russian advance last spring. Now the remainder are being herded west of the Oder-Neisse Line, while the Polish Government, with the consent of Moscow, is already administering everything to the east of it. This movement, if completed, would involve the resettlement of some seven million Germans in the truncated Reich. Whereas, in the case of the Sudetens, therefore, Mr. Churchill and Mr. Truman may be able to arrange with Dr. Benes for a relatively humane solution, it looks as though they are faced with singularly brutal *fait accompli* in West Prussia and Silesia.

King Leopold

The prolonged negotiations in Salzburg have ended in a tactical victory for the Belgian Government. Following King Leopold's announcement that he will neither return nor abdicate, until the people's "real will" has been shown in an election, M. van Acker has secured the passage of a Bill providing for the retention of the Regency until Parliament has specifically agreed to the contrary. A full-dress debate on the monarchy is expected to follow. The Catholics having resigned and gone into opposition for the first time in sixty years, M. van Acker may now take a firmer line, being no longer embarrassed by the need to make concessions to them in the interests of Cabinet unity. In a letter to his brother, the Regent, the King claims to have shared the fate of the Belgian people in good times and bad—a claim which M. van Acker traverses. King Leopold produced the provocative argument, reminiscent of Leon Dégrelle's Fascist philosophy, that he was entitled to appeal to the country over the head of a Government with a Parliamentary majority since he had received "information . . . which convinced me that an important majority in the country insists on my return." Who provided the King with this dubious information ? Or did he, as the American press suggests, mistake the encouragement of other royal houses for the support of his own people ?

Franco's Bill of Rights

Last week the docile *Cortes* unanimously passed General Franco's Charter, nominally restoring some of the liberties Spain lost on the overthrow of the Republic. It is a palpable fraud. Freedom of speech is restored—provided it does not "attack the fundamental principles of the State." Spaniards can associate freely—but only for "legitimate aims in accordance with the provisions of the law." Nobody will be molested for religious nonconformity—so long as he does not reveal his differences with State-protected Catholicism. Spain, in fact, may enjoy the Four Freedoms and much beside, but Spaniards must not interpret that to mean that such rights do not already exist under the Caudillo. In any case, all these provisions are overridden by Article 18 of the Charter, which states :

> All the State organs will function subject to pre-established juridical rules, which cannot be modified or arbitrarily interpreted for mere reasons of expediency nor by the demands of public opinion nor for any similar motive.

This document reveals that Franco's system of government is still designed to secure the continued rule of the Falange. The same is true of his declaration in favour of restoring the monarchy, which will "guarantee the spirit of the Falangist movement" and will not impair its work. Yet, in the same speech, the Caudillo confesses himself unable to comprehend foreign hostility to his regime.

Opposition to De Gaulle

Although the French Cabinet endorsed General de Gaulle's proposals for the coming elections and referendum, their publication has evoked widespread dispute. It is clear that the Communist and Socialist Ministers voted for them merely to avoid a Cabinet crisis. Most of the criticism is directed against the suggestion that, during the period whilst the Constituent Assembly is drafting a constitution, the Head of the Government and his Cabinet shall not be responsible to the Assembly. This, in effect, means that France, for nearly a year after the elections, will continue to be governed by decree as at present. The opposition to this idea is not confined to the official declarations of the Socialist and Communist Parties ; several leaders of the Radical-Socialists, the major Resistance groups, and the C.G.T. have all expressed violent criticism of de Gaulle's project. The States-General, which revived a great tradition by meeting in Paris last week-end, demanded that no restrictions be placed on the Constituent Assembly and that the Government be responsible to it. It has also condemned the referendum as a disguised form of plebiscite. De Gaulle has run into the biggest storm since the liberation of France.

Set-back in India

There is a touch of genius about Lord Wavell : his Gandhi-like statement, taking on his own shoulders, as Viceroy and representative of the British in India, the responsibility for the failure of the Simla Conference, was the best possible way of preventing an outbreak of mutual recrimination and a remarkable proof that an Englishman can sometimes profit by the wisdom of the East. In growth of popular belief that the Viceroy is really impartial, and sincerely desires a settlement of the communal issue, lies the best hope that a way round the present stalemate can yet be found. Confronted with Mr. Jinnah's adamant refusal to co-operate in an Executive Council unless all the Muslim members held the Muslim League's "coupon," Lord Wavell decided to dissolve his Conference and admit the defeat of his proposals. His decision, we believe, was sound. Had he formed a Council of men of his own choice, providing on paper for Hindu-Muslim parity, the League's boycott would have left him in fact dependent for support exclusively on Congress ; and the League represents too substantial a proportion of Muslim opinion for its exclusion from any central authority to be possible. Congress is entitled to complain that Mr. Jinnah is thus being conceded the right to exercise a perpetual veto on any constitutional proposal; but to criticise Mr. Jinnah for "intransigence" leads nowhere ; and his fears of communal discrimination against Muslim minorities may be accepted as genuine and deep. Sir Stafford Cripps has suggested that, as a way out of the deadlock, elections should now be held, and that a Constituent Assembly should debate a constitution.

The Nigerian Troubles

Several correspondents have questioned our assertion that a factor in the present Nigerian unrest has been the complaint by African employees of the administration that they have been less generously treated than Europeans in the matter of "allowances." Schedules which we have received from the Colony show that married European officials, with their wives in the Colony, now draw local allowances ranging from £96 on a salary of £400 to £24 on a salary of £780, while the local allowances of African married officials range from £72 (on a salary of £300) to £18 on a salary of £585. A European official separated from his family (wife and three children) draws, in local and separation allowances, £180 on a £400 salary and £168 on one of £780. African officials, of course, are ineligible for separation allowances. For higher-salaried Europeans the allowances diminish and apply only in cases of "separation." At £960 they cease. It is arguable that even the latest allowances for Europeans do not compensate adequately for the increase in the cost of living. (This is put at 76 per cent. since 1939 by the official index ; but is estimated locally to be in fact over 100 per cent. not 200 per cent. as stated through an unfortunate error in our last issue.) The real point is that African dissatisfaction, justified or not, will continue so long as there is such marked differentiation in lower-grade pay.

The New Man-Power Crisis

The more one looks at the man-power problem the more intractable it appears. The prospects of an addition to the civilian labour force dwindle away almost to nothing when account is taken of retirements already overdue, of the women not in pre-war employment who do not wish to go on working, and of the continued call-up of young men for the Forces. The Ministry of Labour's latest scheme, for the "nomination" by employers of essential workers whom they want back for important trades cannot solve the quantitative problem as a whole. Nor are more appeals to unwilling workers still further to defer retirement likely to have much effect. Something perhaps may be done by offering inducements to women to take new jobs near their permanent homes ; but such inducements are more likely to be effective after an interval, when the war-workers have had a rest and are beginning seriously to miss the incomes they have lost. What is clear is that, with production for export necessarily getting a high priority, consumers may whistle for larger supplies of most things for a good long time to come.

The University Outlook

The Universities are still thoroughly uncertain about their position during the coming academic year. Though a few young students are to be allowed to register in the arts faculties, there is no assurance about the length of their stay, and no priority in release is being given to those whose studies have been interrupted by war service. It is easy to appreciate the difficulties in the way of making exceptions; but the position is serious, both because of its effect on the supply of teachers and because the further delay in getting the Universities back to work seems certain to create quite insoluble problems of congestion when all the students whose higher education has been delayed or interrupted come crowding back, in one or two years' time. The Universities cannot build to meet this rush, nor can they find staffs to deal with it without serious risk of lowering their teaching standards. No doubt there will be more women in residence this autumn, and that will ease, though it cannot remove, the staff difficulty. It seems clear that Universities which still restrict the number of women undergraduates ought to lift the restrictions in order to make the biggest possible immediate contribution towards solving the problems of man-power both in teaching and in other professions, notably in the economic and social fields.

Sop to Cerberus

Mr. Willink has announced that the Government, if it is returned to power, proposes to make an additional £10 million available for grants to the Local Authorities, to help them in meeting their post-war difficulties. This sum will be distributed by means of a formula, weighted in favour of the poorer authorities. In the extreme cases, it may be the equivalent of a 2*s.* rate or of a rate of 1*d.* The grant will last for three years only; it amounts, on the average, to a subsidy equivalent to a rate of 8½*d.* in the £. To this, the local authorities, in view of the immense burdens which are facing them, will be likely to answer "Thank you for very little." £10 million will carry them nowhere towards the financing of the large replanning schemes about which we were all talking so hopefully a little while ago. Obviously, it is not meant to. It can be no more than a modest help to a limited number of areas which have suffered particularly heavily during the war from the evacuation of civil populations and the disturbance of their normal ways of life. The rating problem is much too serious to be solved in this simple way.

Marriage Contract

In a considered judgment delivered this week by Lord Justice du Parcq, the Court of Appeal has ruled that a wife is entitled to a nullity decree if her husband insists, against her will, on employing contraceptives in marital intercourse. In support of its ruling the Court adduced the argument that a judgment to the contrary would mean that a wife who refuses to permit deliberately sterile intercourse is defenceless against a petition for nullity on grounds of non-consummation. Sociologically this judgment is important. It establishes that a woman is assumed under a marriage contract to have a legal right to bear one child, and to terminate the contract if her husband, being sexually potent, denies it to her. Does the converse follow? Can a husband divorce a wife who insists (possibly on grounds, real or debatable, of physical risks) on the use of contraceptives employed by herself? And will the next step be to make *natural* sterility ground for divorce?

A BRITISH PLAN FOR GERMANY

WHAT should Mr. Churchill and Mr. Attlee put forward at Potsdam as British policy for a demilitarised Germany? British and European interests alike demand a policy towards Germany based on two principles.—(1) to prevent the formation of an Anglo-American bloc and a Russian bloc by establishing a unified Europe, acceptable to all three Powers, and (2) to reconstruct a Germany which, in the short run, under close inter-Allied control, will carry out a policy of fulfilment, and which will ultimately become a peaceful member of a unified European community.

By keeping these two basic principles continuously in mind, a practicable solution for most of the immediate German problems can be found. If in the first place we consider only the problem of the administration of a conquered nation, we must all agree that it is vital to prevent an economic catastrophe, not only in Germany but throughout Europe, which might well strain inter-Allied unity to breaking point. To achieve this we must ensure an adequate supply of food and fuel for all parts of Europe and equally for all parts of Germany. This means that we must tackle at once the European and the German transport problem—priority number one.

Already in Germany a situation is being permitted to arise in which each of the four Powers is setting up its own German administration in its own zone under its own Military Government. No one denies that a centralised administration of food, fuel and transport resources would be more efficient both in the short and in the long run. But because each of the four Powers is convinced that the other three would not accept centralisation, it is now being suggested that these vital problems can be solved by setting on top of the four zonal administrations an inter-Allied control whose powers would be limited to the issuing to each zone commander of unanimously agreed directives. They would be unanimous because no commander will carry out in his own zone any inter-Allied directives with which his Government does not agree.

If this system is adopted, and if the inter-Allied control in Berlin is established with no executive powers in the zones, the consequence will be, despite all the verbiage of inter-Allied collaboration, the arbitrary dismemberment of Germany into four States, each controlled by one occupying Power, each seeking to be self-sufficient and each exchanging its products with the other zones on the basis of the hardest bargaining. An example has already been given in the Russian refusal to feed all four zones of Berlin. This resulted in a hard bargain being struck under which the British were compelled to feed their sector of Berlin from the exiguous food resources in the British zone. And this despite the fact that the chief difficulty in the way of producing sufficient coal in the British zone for the whole of Germany is the insufficient rations available for the coal miners. If many more such decisions are made, economic disaster lies ahead of us this winter; and following hard upon it, a growth of inter-Allied suspicion which will result in the permanent partition of Germany and indeed all Europe into a Western and an Eastern sphere of influence.

There is only one way to prevent this happening. That is to set up at once the nucleus of a central German administration working under the closest inter-Allied control. This central administration must have powers to impose a uniform policy on all the zones for food, fuel and communications. And since it is impossible to impose a uniform policy without uniform publicity, it must include a Ministry of Information with executive power over the information services in all zones. This central German administration would not, of course, be a German Government, but in the first instance merely a collection of specialised commissions, manned by Germans, and working to the orders of the inter-Allied Control Commission in Berlin.

But it is not only Germany which needs fuel and food this winter. German coal, for instance, is desperately needed in such countries as Denmark, France, and above all, Italy, where British coal imports have been since 1939 replaced by German. Equally, if German reparations in kind are to make good some of the ravages caused by Germany, not only the German but the European transport system must be reorganised. To achieve this, therefore, the centralised planning for Germany must be subordinated to an inter-Allied European plan, devised and executed by a European Commission which takes over for the period of reconstruction the planning functions of the Anglo-American combined chiefs of staff.

Once the paramount need for an economic plan both for Germany and Europe is admitted, a number of other problems fall into place. Germany will need not only food and fuel, but employment. Europe will need from Germany not only machinery and labour, but goods, manufactured in Germany itself. How much machinery and labour shall be removed as reparations and how much permitted to remain in Germany and produce there, can only be decided when the European Commission has surveyed Europe's needs and the central German administration has calculated and organised Germany's material resources.

Let us repeat: the central German administration would in the first instance be merely the executant of the orders of the inter-Allied control and through it of the European Commission. But we should be wise to accept, what appears to be the Russian view, that a German administration without a German Government can only be a short-term expedient. A good deal of confusion has been caused by the American use of the word "Military Government" to describe an organisation which was only designed to supervise the administration of occupied enemy territory. If there is one thing military government cannot do, it is to govern and administer a territory. This was made quite clear in the case of Italy, and the difficulties are enormously increased when the central military government authority becomes not merely Anglo-American, but Anglo-American-Russian-French. If we consider only the problem of taxation, it is clear that, as soon as it is reasonably safe to do so, a German Government must be established to assume responsibility for the central administration of Germany and to receive the policy directives of the inter-Allied control.

We do not suggest for one moment that a German Government could be safely established for many months. But Mr. Churchill and Mr. Attlee should resist all American attempts to prolong the period of military government. They should side with the Russians in pressing for the granting of political liberty as soon as possible in regard to local government. Political responsibility should be restored to the Germans from the bottom upwards and preparations should be begun at once for the holding of elections for urban and rural councils. As soon as the Germans re-establish their ability to manage parish pump politics, they should be permitted to attempt the greater responsibilities of provincial self-government; and the recognition of a central government should be the end of a long and carefully planned process of re-education. This procedure would have the further advantage of strengthening the autonomous tendencies of the provinces and weakening the central administration, a vital requirement for a peaceful Germany. All this would take time, probably years, and for this reason it is essential that the initial stages should be agreed at Potsdam, including the restoration at the earliest opportunity of German newspapers, the German publishing trade and an educational system working in all zones to a central directive.

There remain two major problems to be solved—party politics and frontiers. As we have argued frequently before, any attempt to re-establish capitalist enterprise will only precipitate economic crisis in Germany and antagonise the Russians. The breaking of the power of the large landowners, of German heavy industry, and of the chemical and other trusts, is an essential preliminary to a restoration even of local German self-government. It will be essential, therefore, deliberately to prevent the formation of a German Conservative Party designed, whether openly or covertly, to further the interests of the Junkers and industrialists. Equally a Catholic Party under the pretence of a defence of Church rights might only too easily provide a weapon of political reaction. The restored German political parties, therefore, must be based on the interests of the peasants, the industrial workers, and the middle classes. Without a conscious backing of the peaceable elements and the exclusion of the militarist element in German life, the restoration of political freedom in Germany will be as ineffective in 1945 as it was in 1918.

It is only when all these factors have been taken into account that the frontier problem can be considered in proper perspective. Granted the successful establishment of a European Commission; granted that the reconstruction of Germany is undertaken as part of European reconstruction and designed to insure her fulfilment of the task of reparations; granted that political power is removed from the Junker and industrialist class and that the more peaceful elements in Germany begin their training in self-government provincially and not nationally—granted all this, the security arguments for a drastic dismemberment of Germany are largely invalidated. And the Poles and the French, not to mention the Belgians and the Dutch, would be ill-advised to assume the responsibility for governing large and hostile German minorities. Mr. Chiurchill and Mr. Attlee, we believe, should use their influence to cut down extravagant Polish claims, while admitting the claim to East Prussia and the Silesian coalfields. They should urge the French to join with them in pressing for planned European reconstruction and planned exploitation of German industry and labour for reparation purposes, as a wiser and more realistic policy than the frontier on the Rhine. Indeed, the alternatives are clear. Either Germany is firmly integrated into a European plan or Europe and Germany alike are dismembered into an Eastern and a Western zone. One way provides the basis for a peace settlement, the other for an armed truce.

VISIT TO POLAND

[By Our Moscow Correspondent]

To-day a new Poland is in the making, and that is a fact which is recognised by almost every Pole, even by those Poles who do not like it. Like every country of Continental Europe, Poland has "gone Left" not because everybody's personal preference lies that way, but through the sheer necessity of economic laws. And it is becoming a somewhat galling experience to find time and again, in one country after another in this new Europe of to-day, that all that is most reactionary in these countries insists on looking to England as "the last hope." Nothing has been a worse advertisement for England than the wretched Raczkiewicz-Arciszewski Government in London. In the minds of too many people the idea of England is becoming identified with it. It is not accidental that those reactionaries who are left in Poland should even to-day be postulating a war between Britain and Russia. They are living in a world of dreams. But the very fact that the B.B.C. continued to serve as the mouthpiece for the London Government to the bitter end has had the wretched effect of putting, in the mind of only too many Poles, something like an equation mark between England and Arciszewsk.

Like almost every country in Europe, Poland is to-day going through a revolutionary economic change. After six years of German occupation private capital has practically disappeared. There are no big landowners in Poland, no big bankers, very few big industrialists. Apart from some small firms the whole work of the country's restoration is to-day in the hands of the State. The State alone can finance and indeed manage restoration of the country. What private contractor could on his own move this desert of brick rubble that is called Warsaw? If there are any big industrialists left in Poland they are the exception, not the rule. Poland is potentially a rich country with enormous possibilities for agricultural, industrial and foreign trade development, but only the State can create conditions wherein all three will thrive.

The country is much more devastated than one is apt to think, looking at it from a distance. Six million people have been killed. Warsaw, Danzig, Poznan, Breslau and many other towns are in ruins. Agriculture has little stock left and less machinery, and the full success of agrarian reform presupposes a high degree of co-operation through the establishment of something like tractor stations and co-operative ploughing and harvesting. The development of foreign trade presupposes the rebuilding of Gdynia and Danzig harbours, and the attraction into Silesia of hundreds of thousands of new workers. Six years of deliberate stultification require the training of thousands of new teachers and the opening of hundreds of schools for training engineers and skilled workers. The destruction of the entire Jewish population has caused a terrible gap in light industry. More "regrouping" of one kind or another, more shifting of human masses from one occupation to another will be required in Poland than in any other country. The manufacture of consumer goods on an ever-growing scale is essential if the peasants are to sell their food at reasonable prices. In no country is *laissez faire* less likely to succeed than in Poland, and everybody realises it. "What will the Government do?" is the question both peasants and workers ask repeatedly. In fact, it is the only question they do ask. There is no conceivable alternative to State-controlled economy.

The Poles hate the Germans with an intensity of hatred unknown even to the Russians. That is what six years of systematic humiliations and all the Maidaneks and Oswiecims have done. And there is also Warsaw. For the tragedy of Warsaw did not begin in August 1944. Warsaw, especially since the middle of 1943, had almost daily round-ups and dozens were shot in the streets. For the fearful destruction of Warsaw and its historic monuments there is intense bitterness against the Germans, and while there is condemnation of those who ordered the rising, there is also the feeling that "we were all in it," and, despite the disaster to which it led, there is pride in the phrase "I was in Warsaw at the time." It was an unreasonable, quixotic but still noble self-assertion of the Polish national spirit. But the price of 300,000 lives was terrible, and too great. Regarding the Red Army at the time, every person in Warsaw has told me the same story; the day the rising began, the Russian guns were near. The next day they had grown fainter, and then there was silence. The truth is the Red Army had been driven back.

As in other countries, food in Poland is short. Government supplies are often insufficient to fulfil the demands of the ration cards even after the Red Army has placed stocks at the Polish authorities' disposal. Nearly all townspeople still depend to some extent on the open market. Here prices are absurdly high, though lower than a few months ago. Many people make ends meet as far as possible by selling belongings and also speculating in a small way. For that reason in the towns one observes this pernicious habit, survival of German days, that has tended to make some people reluctant to take a regular job. It is one of the problems with which the Government is faced, and it may not be satisfactorily settled until prices drop to a reasonable level through an increase in consumer goods. A kilo of butter costs in the open market 300 *Zloty* instead of two *Zloty* pre-war, a box of matches 12 *Zloty* instead of 5 *Grosz*. Yet, catastrophic though such a situation may appear at first sight, one shou remember that six months ago the same kilo butter cost 1,000 *Zloty*! Things are improvin If Danzig Harbour was a complete shambles tw months ago, one quarter of the port is now read to receive ships, and the first train-loads Silesian coal have arrived there to be shipp to Sweden. If one important coal area visited produced 4,000 tons of coal per day March, its production to-day is 12,000, or a litt over half of the pre-war output. So there unquestionably progress, and the bulk of th population is looking to the Government fo further progress and improvement.

The attitude of the population to the Government may be described very roughly as sayin that one-third of the population (namely, th working-class part of the peasantry who hav gained from the land reform, the progressiv part of the intelligentsia and the Army, who a proud of the victories they have won side by sid with the Russians) are actively supporting th Government. More than one-third is supportin the Government passively, as it were, in the spir of "wait and see"; but this attitude has bee changing into active support since the establishment of the National Government and the arriva in Poland of Mikolajczyk, who has unquestionabl wide support from the peasantry. Lastly, ther is a disgruntled minority which accepts th Government as "inevitable" but without enthusiasm. These people are mostly the ruine middle class who until recently still believed i the virtues of the London Government.

From Poland proper all Russian troops wi have gone in a couple of months, except for a fe communication lines into Germany. At Breslau however, and some other "new" territories th Russians intend to stay till the Peace Conference which will decide Poland's exact frontier. Som Poles are slightly nervous at the thought they ma not get every bit of country up to Oder–Neiss line after all. This fear is based chiefly on th unwillingness of the Russians at present to expe all Germans from Breslau and a few other places But such mass expulsions involve so man practical reconstruction problems that they ca hardly be solved before the elections. Meanwhil people want to see what the Government ha done, and the Government wants to show wha it can do. It needs much help from abroad, an the new Polish-Soviet Trade Agreement is a important step in that direction. But the Pole are also expecting much from the Swedes an America and at least something from Britain—credits, or trade, or both.

BROMIDES WILL BE SERVED DURING THE INTERVAL

Victorious Spring in arid Summer ends
And politicians wait their resurrection,
While peacefully the crescent moon attends
The three-weeks' pregnancy of the election;
Winston and Sagittarius* depart,
Leaving the buskers for their counterpart.

The hidden hand of Laski rocks no more
The cradle of a cabalistic clique,
The friends of yester-year are feeling sore
Where Bevin butted with the other cheek;
But (maugre Tokio) those lobster teas
Lure urban England to unscheduled seas.

The flags of the United Nations wave
Over the citadel of fallen foes,
The generals survey a nation's grave,
But there are other things the soldier knows;
And, carelessly conceived, some future brat
May teach his stubborn relatives to frat.

For we, like Sherman, marching to the sea,
May solve our problems by an aberration,
And those who chart the course of history
Find in our faults the hope of our salvation,
When bread upon the waters, idly cast,
Comes home *to roost* out of the fruitful past . . .

Reginald Reynolds

**On a month's holiday*

A LONDON DIARY

The 10,000 sheets, flown to Potsdam for the comfort of a few hundred Conference members, have put every British housewife in a bad temper. A woman in the train this week launched a furious attack on the correspondents who sent back such rubbishy news and the whole compartment agreed. But it is not the fault of the correspondents. They were given this item, and much like it, as an official hand-out; and they cabled it because they had no real news to send. It looks as though Mr. Churchill and Mr. Truman had fallen for the Russian attitude to the release of news and censorship of the press. I daresay they find it convenient for the period of the Conference, but free reporting is a principle on which Britain and America should have stood firm. The Russians have never understood the British and American idea of a free press, and their attitude is a formidable obstacle to unified control in Germany. The British and American publics will not put up with reports that are nothing but official hand-outs.

* * *

I am not surprised that non-fraternisation, which was enthusiastically welcomed by the Beaverbrook and Rothermere press last October, as an essential part of our post-war policy to Germany, was equally enthusiastically denounced by the same newspapers before its relaxation last week. I remember arguing, at the time it was introduced, that the press lords who were advocating the tough line would be the first to go soft when the war was over. Instead of trying to steady the swing of public emotion, they followed it—and aggravated it. I agree with Lord Vansittart's point in a recent broadcast to America that the one fatal method of dealing with Germans—or other people—is to try to enforce a policy and then to withdraw it. But I drew the opposite conclusion about non-fraternisation: that, since a rule which was politically and biologically indefensible could not be maintained when the fighting was over, it would be wiser not to introduce it at all. We certainly look pretty silly now; and I felt quite sorry for the B.B.C. German service when I tuned in the other night and heard its laboured apologia for the change. Vansittart could never understand that indiscriminate denunciation of Germans was not tough to Germans, but the most dangerous way of inviting an equally indiscriminate softness. Having spent ten months discouraging anti-Nazis by its enforcement, we shall now probably go to the other extreme and tolerate fraternisation with the worst type of Germans

* * *

It looks as though the importance of organising press, cinema, and other information services in the British zone has at last been recognised. I hear that Field-Marshal Montgomery, who throughout the campaign showed little enthusiasm for "the paper war," has begun to notice the glaring contrast, both as regards specialist personnel and equipment, between the British and American zones. He has acquired Major-General Bishop from P.W.E. to head up the organisation—a good choice, I would guess, keen, straightforward and likeable. I am also glad to hear that Sir W. Strang has been appointed as the Field-Marshal's chief political adviser in place of Mr. Kirkpatrick, who, I hear, now that SHAEF has been wound up, will become the Foreign Office Under-Secretary responsible for those portions of the Ministry of Information, P.W.E. and the British Council which will be permitted to linger on as our peace-time publicity service.

* * *

Why in the shocking housing shortage are there so many houses still uninhabited? The answer is twofold. First, there are the landlords of empty houses who refuse to let them under rent control restrictions and are holding them off the market in the hope of still more inflated selling prices. Secondly there are many premises which can only be made serviceable by conversion—involving sometimes the use of two adjoining, but separately owned houses—at a cost which the owners are often unable to shoulder, though in many areas licences for such purposes are freely granted. At present the Ministry of Health's Orders empower local authorities to requisition empty accommodation not only for the "bombed-out" but for families "inadequately housed." In the latter case, however, landlords must be given "a reasonable opportunity for letting or re-occupation"—a marvellous loophole for dilatory action by local authorities on which property-owners are strongly represented. If the situation is to be dealt with before irregular commandeering gets out of hand, the Minister of Health will have to make a new Order specifying a short time-limit (say two months) after which empty premises should be deemed to be available for requisitioning. In addition, local authorities may have to be instructed, and financially aided by the Treasury, to spend money on "conversions" which private owners cannot, or will not, carry out.

* * *

News from Greece, unless it comes from a correspondent with first-hand information, should be treated with caution. Both Right and Left are fertile rather than accurate in their propaganda. But I have now learnt from a certainly reliable source some of the facts about the proposed "monarchist putsch" which was reported in some British papers and referred to in this journal a fortnight ago. A putsch was in fact proposed by General Ventiris, Chief of Staff. It was stopped by Mr. Voulgaris, the Premier, on the ground that the Government could rely on obtaining a monarchist majority in the elections. Evidence that the Left is being terrorised continues to arrive from many sources, and I see that the Greek Minister of the Interior has promised an inquiry. It will be a real inquiry only if the British make it so. Meanwhile I have seen some extraordinary allegations made by Greeks who were interned in British camps in North Africa two years ago. They are said to have been smuggled out in minute handwriting on tiny scraps of paper. I find many of these allegations against British officers quite incredible. But the conditions in these camps may be very bad and should be investigated. And ought these men to be imprisoned at all?

* * *

The A.E.U. is the first trade union to launch out as patron of the arts. Its decision to accept women members from January of last year showed that it was ready for innovations. Now it is celebrating its Silver Jubilee, and, apart from the usual festivities and meetings, it has produced a film, a play, a history of the Union and an exhibition of paintings. The war has held up all these arrangements except the exhibition, but the film *Unity is Strength*—which is a dramatisation of the Union's history—may have its first showing this month. The play, *A Century for George*, has been written by Montague Slater, who wrote the libretto for Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*. The history of the Union, which should appear before long, has been written by James Jefferys, a young graduate from the London School of Economics who has worked in an aircraft factory for most of the war. This is surely an admirable precedent. It was V. S. Pritchett, I recall, who suggested in these columns that trade unions should commission writers and artists to devote themselves to some aspect of their industry and give them a free hand to work with as many facilities of access and inquiry as they have enjoyed in wartime.

* * *

The National Peace Council—a body which has stuck to its job of studying problems of world peace during the war—has elected Sir John Orr as its President. Sir John Orr, who is one of the first experts in the science of nutrition, became M.P. for the Scottish Universities not many months ago. In his recent Election Address he again declared that the most practicable road to peace lay through forming the habit of co-operation by getting on with specific jobs of work on international lines. Of all specific pieces of work the provision of a World Food Plan based on the actual needs of the different nations is at once the most pressing, the most attractive and the most fruitful. It provides, that is to say, the easiest basis for international co-operation, since everybody is a gainer and nobody a loser if all of us are well fed. He reminds us of the recommendation of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Conference in 1943, that all nations should co-operate to bring freedom from want of food to all men in all lands, and the resultant establishment of a World Food and Agricultural Organisation to prepare a World Food Plan.

* * *

The following Liturgy by an anonymous pen was recently posted in the Calcutta United Services Club:

FORM OF DAILY SERVICE FOR
USE IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Let us pray—
O Lord grant that this day we come to no decisions,
Neither run into any kind of responsibility,
But that all our doings may be ordered to establish
New and quite unwarranted departments.
For ever and ever.

Hymn—
O Thou, who seest all things below,
Grant that thy servants may go slow,
That they may study to comply
With regulations till they die.

Teach us Lord to reverence
Committees more than common sense,
Impress our minds to make no plan,
But pass the baby when we can.

And when the Tempter seems to give
Us feelings of initiative,
Or when alone we go too far,
Chastise us with a circular.

Mid war and tumult, fire and storms,
Strengthen us we pray with forms,
Thus will Thy servants ever be,
A flock of perfect sheep for Thee.

I can think of Departments nearer Whitehall where "Amen" would be added with pious fervour.

* * *

If there were ever a clear international obligation it is to find homes for Jewish exiles. No people have suffered such agonies as the Jews; none are offered so little hope. It shocks me, for instance, to learn that our pusillanimity is so great that we do not even provide permits for Palestine to children rescued from Nazi camps. Mr. Churchill has a good past record on this subject and the Big Three will have to tackle it, thorns and all. They might begin by reading Victor Gollancz's pamphlet *Nowhere to Lay Their Heads*.

* * *

The lighted streets have given London a carnival atmosphere this week and even in the daily press, with the horrific "pre-invasion bombing" of Japan as its main item, there are signs of peace. Detective stories, cricket matches, murder reports and prize-fights remind us that, when the shooting is over, man still needs his normal alternatives to war.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to A. M. Mardiros.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

During the concluding stages of the case, Miss Dawn was questioned by Mr. Sandbach as to whether she knew the meaning of the word unsophisticated. "I don't know," she replied. "Someone who is not a prostitute, I suppose."
—*Daily Worker.*

We regret that a printer's error in last week's report of Mr. Churchill's tour caused the comment on the throwing of a milk bottle through Mr. Brendan Bracken's car window at an earlier date to read "Unfortunately Mr. Bracken was not injured." Naturally, this should have read, "Fortunately Mr. Bracken was not injured."—*Kensington News.*

The local paper *Le Courrier de Bayonne* is publishing a special edition partly in French, partly in English, so that the Premier can have the latest news.—*Daily Mail.*

—said that when her husband came home on leave from Germany he called her a bad woman. This so upset her that she went to the pictures.—*Bristol Evening Post.*

Young man requires comfortable lodgings, out all day; every night, and away week-ends. West side preferred.—Advert. in *Welwyn Times.*

P.W. CAMP 168

Last Monday an inquest was held on the body of a Spanish anti-Fascist who committed suicide in a British Prisoner of War camp for German prisoners. This incident may at last compel the War Office to redress an injustice which must surely be one of the most painful and unnecessary minor tragedies of the war.

The facts are these. When France was liberated, the concentration camps in which the Spanish Republican anti-Fascists were confined were captured by the Americans. Owing to language difficulties and the confusion of war, these Spaniards were still kept in camps and some who had escaped, and joined the F.F.I., were put back into prison. Later these camps were taken over by the British and the inmates were shipped to Britain. After the normal preliminary interrogation they were all, for some reason, transferred to Prisoner of War camps for Germans. This occurred some nine months ago. Among these prisoners were Jose Ferri Verdu, Deputy for Alicante in the Spanish parliament, and Jose Juan Saura, a lieutenant-colonel of the General Staff of the Republican Army. Before their imprisonment in England, all of them had been for more than six years in French concentration camps.

From the first, the Spaniards protested against their treatment, claiming to be treated as allies rather than enemy prisoners; some expressed a wish to be sent back to France ultimately. They pointed out that they too had fought against the Germans and Italians. Yet now they were shut up with German S.S. men and other enemy prisoners of war who openly jeered at them for having fought on the same side as the Allies—only to be treated as their enemies. They also complained that they saw Italians, who fought against Britain, going about quite freely, while they, who fought against Italy and Germany, were treated as prisoners of war. Their protests and petitions have so far had no effect on the complacent Directorate of Prisoners of War at the War Office.

About six weeks ago, another group of anti-Fascist Spaniards were liberated in Guernsey, where they had been sent by the Germans for forced labour. They too were sent to join their countrymen at Camp 168. This brought the total number in the camp to over 200.

In June, many of them declared a hunger strike, in an attempt to force the hand of the authorities. All they asked for was equal treatment with Italian "Co-operators."

Our treatment is driving these men to despair. One of their number has now killed himself. So far all the response from the War Office is a letter which stated, after nine months, that "their status and future are under active discussion." Something more active than discussion seems to be required in the Directorate of Prisoners of War.

THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

The Hadow Scheme, which removed the eleven *plus* children from the village school, generally to a Central School in the nearest town, has undoubtedly been for the advantage of the children. But it has had a pernicious influence on the status of the village teachers. They were able to look after the interests of their children from the time that they first came to school as infants until they left for their first job of work. They were often the trusted friends and advisers of the parents. Now that children pass out of their care at the most impressionable age their work is limited and necessarily dull.

As is the rule in most villages, our school is a non-provided Church of England establishment, controlled by managers, four of whom must be Churchmen or Churchwomen, with one nominated by the County Education Authority and another nominated by the Parish Council. The vicar is the chairman of the managers. This is the custom, but there does not seem to be any statutory obligation for his selection. He has, of course, the right of entry for religious instruction, the conscience clause allowing parents to withdraw their children from such instruction if they will. I have never heard of any case of this withdrawal, nor is there the smallest parental objection in this neighbourhood to the teaching of what may be regarded as "sacramental doctrine." This is perhaps owing to the fact that there is no Nonconformist chapel in the village and no Roman Catholics among the villagers.

The managers all belong to the class who would never dream of sending their children to the village school.

The comparative disinterest of the parents in the education of their children might be considerably modified by direct representation among the managers; and there should be a Ministry of Education Order that three of the managers should be elected at a meeting of parents called, not by the vicar, nor by the chairman of the Parish Council, but by the headmaster or the headmistress. Such a reform would, I am convinced, have a most salutary result.

It is admitted that generally the buildings of the non-provided schools are infinitely inferior to the buildings of the provided schools. The great majority of the schools on the Ministry's black list are non-provided. The buildings are defective, the sanitary arrangements are often disgusting, there is often no adequate playground. In this respect our village is fortunate. The building is adequate for the number of children under eleven.

It is notorious that the provided schools secure the best of the teachers while the non-provided have to be content with men and women who, on the whole, are less well equipped for the job. It is pleasanter to work under the intelligent direction of experts than under a body of managers, probably instinct with class prejudice and unsympathetic to educational progress even if they are aware that such a thing exists. In my observation—once again I would accent that it is a very narrow experience—the head teachers, who are certificated, are capable and keen; but they have to depend for assistance on the class known to the Ministry of Education as "Supplementary."

The village school teacher is generally lonely. She (it is usually "she") is often a friendly soul with no real friends in the village with whom she can gossip over a cup of tea. Village salaries are lower than town salaries and the life has few attractions except for those rare souls who have a countryside vocation. The consequence is that of the certificated teachers in public elementary schools in 1933–1934—the men and women able to pick and choose their positions—only 34 per cent. were employed in rural areas, while 71.4 per cent. of the uncertificated and 87.5 of the supplementary were employed there. In 1936, 95.1 per cent. of London's teachers were certificated, while in the the rural schools only 63.7 per cent. were certificated.

The uncertificated teachers, though without any pedagogic training, must have some educational qualifications. They must be able to pass some such test as that supplied by the School Certificate Examination. The "supplementaries" have no qualification whatever. It used to be said in the days of "the seminaries for young gentlemen," described by H. G. Wells in *Kipps*, that, when a man had failed at everything else, including horse-coping, he became a schoolmaster. And it is no libel on these "supplementary" women to say that they are schoolmistresses for the lack of ability to be typists or shop assistants.

Mr. G. H. Gardiner well says that "the first business of the teacher is to make the child like going to school." As I see the small children hurry along the lanes in the morning it is evident that they do like going to school, and this is due to the fact that the mistress is a young woman of intelligence and vocation. From her time-table, which I have before me, I see that in addition to arithmetic, reading, writing, history and geography the children have physical training, and spend some time in nature study and in such occupations as basket and mat making. The girls are taught to sew and the boys are taught to model and there are organised games in the school hours. All this is intelligent. And there is at least the attempt to inculcate some appreciation of the natural beauty in which the children's young lives are being spent.

The Board of Education, as it then was, declared in a pamphlet published in 1934 that "education in the rural areas must by no means be restricted to those interests which are native to the countryside and therefore familiar to the inhabitants," and the National Union of Agricultural Workers is emphatic in its opposition to the creation of fundamental differences in the scheme for rural and urban schools. I do not think that there is any definitely rural note in the education in the Central School to which our village children are sent; and, indeed, it is a common complaint that, since the Hadow Scheme was initiated, the Central Schools have been one of the most active instruments in attracting the more intelligent boys and girls from rural to urban occupations.

The village children are notably healthy and are not lacking in intelligence. Observant London schoolmasters, evacuated on account of the blitz, who have had both town and country boys in their classes, say that the country boys are certainly slower in the uptake but on the whole not less receptive.

It is, of course, far too soon to be able to judge how the Education Act will affect the higher education of the village child and whether it will provide the countryside with a new order of workers, with sufficient scientific knowledge to provide a greater interest in the work of the fields and the technical equipment required on the mechanised farm. There has been in the past very scanty provision for this education. A small number of scholarships to agricultural colleges are awarded by the Ministry of Agriculture and the County Councils, but the niggle has been pitiful compared with the Danish rural colleges.

Probably because of the difficulties that attend the oversight of a scattered district, the school attendance officer is far less successful in securing regular attendance, especially of the older children, than he is in London. I continually notice boys and girls, and always the same boys and girls, loafing in the village when they should be at school, and nothing seems to happen. I have never heard of a local parent being prosecuted. Similarly in the village school the medical supervision is far more perfunctory than it is in London.

Comparatively regular attendance is no proof of parental interest in education. The mothers rejoice when the holidays are over, and the children are no longer "in the way." To them the school is little more than the place where the child is looked after for the greater part of the day, and given a good dinner at the school canteen until the leaving age is reached, and the boy's or girl's earnings can be added to the family budget.

If the parents are indifferent, the employers, from whom the school managers are generally chosen, are definitely hostile. One farmer quite seriously told me that he dated the decline of the countryside from the institution of free and compulsory school attendance. The children would be much better off if they were turned out to work in the fields as their grandfathers were. "What's the use of schooling to a cowman?" he asked indignantly. Judging from the village boys and girls who leave school at fourteen, the answer is "precious little to the cowman or to anyone else."

But perhaps the new Education Act will give English rural schooling some real value.

SIDNEY DARK

WHY NO NURSES?

[BY A CORRESPONDENT]

THE national shortage of nurses shows signs of developing to a more acute stage than ever before. Unless something is done within the next few months the position will become so bad that many hospital wards, suffering an unprecedented degree of pressure, will have to close.

It has been suggested that the Ministry of Health's Athlone Committee, which suspended action after the publication in 1939 of its interim report, should now sit to continue its task. The position, however, has greatly worsened since the Athlone Committee sat. Today only a basic re-examination of conditions by a new body will serve. A new view, and a non-professional view, is required. Indeed, it is not lack of inquiry that is responsible for the nursing shortage. *The Lancet* instituted an inquiry in 1930 and issued a set of recommendations which were the model for all subsequent improvements in conditions. The inquiry was organised and financed by the journal, which did a job that should have been done by an alert Health Ministry. It was not until seven years after *The Lancet* inquiry that the Ministry took action, in the form of an inter-departmental committee under the chairmanship of the Earl of Athlone. This body's interim report consisted largely of official confirmation of familiar facts.

After 1930, improvements in nursing conditions were made by the more forward-looking local government bodies concerned. Voluntary hospitals have for the most part moved only when movement has been forced upon them. Their traditional prestige provided them for many years with cheap, unprotected labour. The nation is now paying the price.

Under pressure of war, the Rushcliffe Committee made salary proposals which, in the light of voluntary hospital rates in 1930 and since, were revolutionary. Trained nurses' salaries (plus residential emoluments) rose to £100 a year from the £65 which obtained (in the best of the municipal hospitals) in 1930. Still larger increases went to matrons. The new rates, however, did not produce a flow of recruits. The auxiliary military women's services, the civil defence services, war industry, the Red Cross and civil nursing reserves, the private relief and canteen bodies, all had recruited large numbers of women, not at high rates of pay; but, despite the urgent need and the constant publicity, there was no big influx to professional nursing.

What is it that these temporary callings had which a professional employment in nursing does not offer? Excitement is certainly not the whole answer: nursing has always had its dramatic phases. Moreover it is significant that, though nearly all the Athlone recommendations have been implemented, the remedy for shortage of nurses is still not in sight. Only two important Athlone and *Lancet* recommendations have remained in abeyance. One, designed to close the gap between the age of school leaving and the age of entry to nursing, is a relatively simple matter for cure. (There are possibilities in probable post-war social service developments of jobs which will act as "feeders" to the nursing service.) The other recommendation is that which was aimed at bringing nurses' private-time conditions into line with those common to most young women outside nursing. It is the failure to implement this recommendation that is the main key to present troubles. A long and bitter war has been fought for national freedom. Personal freedom in the nursing profession seems to have a small value.

Despite assurances by authority, it cannot be denied that nurses' conditions generally are bad. It is not simply that feeding is still poor, that private time is cut into by short staffing, that nurses' work is increased by shortage of domestic labour. It is that the nurse in her private time has no retreat from the scene and conditions of a very difficult working day. In certain hospitals—and they are many in number—discipline is still as severe and petty as that not uncommonly known where women work under their own sex. The sense of regimentation is the more severe in nursing which is still working in the closed circuit of celibacy. This oppression—for oppression it is—surrounds the nurse for twenty-four hours of each day. Until the *Lancet* and Athlone recommendations suggesting the establishment of the hostel system are acted upon throughout the country, nursing will not attract the girl who, with schooldays fresh in mind, values freedom to be her own self in her own time.

Hospital authorities say that parents expect their nursing-student daughters to be under adequate care while away from home, and this is taken to imply that the matron must be the person *in loco parentis*. All that need be said of this implication is that it ceased to have any value twenty years ago. A matron is a poor substitute for a mother because she necessarily sees the girl as a working unit in the first place and as a human being only in the second. The only person who can attempt, as a job of work, to replace the mother of the student nurse is a woman of understanding, unconnected with the day-to-day working of a hospital, who can maintain a sympathetic relationship with young women and see that they have the best conditions for happiness. This involves complete separation of the hostel from the working scene.

This, to-day, is the big shortcoming, and the solution of this problem of nurses' private time requires investigation by a body of no less standing than the Athlone or Rushcliffe bodies, but composed of men and women with experience of girls and their psychology rather than knowledge of hospital life and professional needs. If action is now taken to institute a thorough inquiry and to give the working nurse adequate representation in it, those women who are enduring the discomforts of loss of time-off, of mixing day with night duty, of hasty and inadequate feeding, and of constant pressure of work under generally harassing conditions, will have at least hope to keep them going. They have endured bombing, and the rush of casualties, with a spirit which would not have shamed Florence Nightingale; but now that the heroic years have passed, they face a worsening of conditions rather than a let-up. Their lives to-day are the poorest present publicity for nursing recruitment.

RADIO NOTES

THE singeing problem of Domestic Service was lately made the subject of a most excellent White Paper by Miss Violet Markham, who came to the microphone on July 10 to give us the gist of her conclusions. Miss Markham does not broadcast particularly well (there was a yawning chasm after every sentence), but her voice had qualities that commanded immediate attention and respect; it was the voice of a woman both competent and modest, and what it said bore all the evidences of great intelligence, energy and good feeling. Two points emerged as capital: (1) the relation of servant and employer is, and must be, a *personal* one; (2) the service is indispensable to all classes (i.e., the working-class mother needs help in the home just as much as anybody else). Miss Markham rightly emphasised the importance of status, because the present crisis is largely due to the stigma apparently attaching, in the minds of many young people, to domestic service—a stigma which I believe to be imaginary, since it relates to obsolete conditions. Independence is the operative word in many contexts to-day; but it seems worth while pointing out that most human relationships (including marriage) acquire their value in our eyes precisely because they contain some degree at least of mutual dependence. A private house, however small, is *private*, and the relationships that prevail within it cannot be conducted on the lines of, say, a Post Office. This is another way of saying that the personal factor, which was the foundation of domestic service in the past, will have to remain if the position is to be mutually satisfactory. Miss Markham suggests an Institute of Training and Supply.

No doubt something of the kind will have to be set up, if only as a makeshift; but I foresee trouble when the fully-fledged Domestic Help, attired from head to foot in reproachful white piqué and crackling with hygiene, attempts to foist the Institute's method of cooking, or bed-making, or whatever, on Mrs. Everyman, who has her own ideas and does not propose to change them. For, in the last resort, the situation—like that in any other service—depends on obedience to the words: "Do as I say." The command should not, of course, have to be made explicit; but harm is done when—as at present—a pretence is made that domestic service, however munificently paid, is in some mysterious way done as a "favour." This anomaly is a legacy from the bad old days when the most abominably unreasonable demands were made on servants who were virtually powerless to resist them (the "Marchioness" in *The Old Curiosity Shop* is not an exaggerated picture); but there is no longer any excuse for it, since the position has entirely changed. The question of hours is probably as important as any, and this can only be solved by common sense and good will; if the number of hours is fixed by law, it can be left to each individual employer to concert the arrangement of them with the servant. "Living out" will, as Miss Markham suggested, no doubt be far more general than it was in the past; but in country districts it is neither possible nor desirable. One thing is certain: the present position, which implies that every man and woman in the community can do all their own house-work as well as make machinery or do full office hours or edit a newspaper, is utterly ridiculous and to a large extent responsible for the fatigue and nervous strain from which the civilian population of this country is at present suffering.

The postponed programmes of the Fauré centenary were wholly delightful—the gentlest and most persuasive of recalls to order. I enjoyed particularly Betty Bannerman's singing, and the perfect concord of Clifford Curzon with members of the Griller Quartet in the C minor Piano Quartet, and Kathleen Long's performance of the too seldom heard *Fantaisie* for piano and orchestra. This piece is of the same nature as the more famous *Ballade*, and not much inferior to that exquisite masterpiece. The Requiem, again, was a reminder that serenity is still an occasionally possible state of mind.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*July 22nd.* Piano Duets (Denis Matthews and Howard Ferguson, 10.15 a.m.); Dvorak String Quartet in G (10.53 p.m.).

July 23rd. *Opium-Eater* (9.30).

July 24th. "Should we Educate for Leadership?" (7.30); *The Character Divorced* (8.30); "Across Europe without a Passport" (9.15); "The Making of a Poem": Poe's *The Raven* (10.40).

July 25th. String Orchestra (2.0); "If only we Lived in the Country" (8.30); Pacific War Commentary (Sir Philip Joubert, 9.15).

July 26th. Madrigals (3.5).

July 27th. "The Ears of Britain" (10.0).

July 28th. Beethoven Violin Concerto (Ginette Neveu, G.F.P., 7.15).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"Air Plan" and "Waltz Time" at the Empire
"Blood on the Sun," at the London Pavilion

What will happen to the M.O.I. when the war is over no one knows, not even the aspiring candidate for Paddington, but in two directions at least it has created an excellent organisation which it would be a pity to undo. One is the series of Government pamphlets illustrative of Britain at war (our appetite for documentation will not end, surely, with the fall of Japan). The second is films. British films have improved immensely during the war, and that improvement is due in no small measure to documentaries sponsored by the M.O.I. I don't mean to suggest that all documentary effort should be under the official thumb, heaven forbid! but there should be Government backing and, if necessary, direction, for those who want it. Few people realise the extent to which the film has been developed as an instrument of education and propaganda—in the services, in schools, in village halls—and much of this activity should obviously remain under Government control. To private effort might be left more original and controversial film-making such as Rotha's *World of Plenty*.

Meanwhile at the Empire a new M.O.I. documentary shows us the part played by the Allied air forces, and especially the R.A.F., in the invasion of Europe. Communications had to be smashed, bridges destroyed, coast batteries silenced, without giving away to the enemy the chosen landing places. The battering was tremendous—exceeded only perhaps by this week's softening of Japan from the air—and it was followed by a period in which all-out attack made it impossible for the retreating Nazis to move except at night. Directions were signalled to bombers from a specially converted tank. The policy, which seems to have failed at Cassino, was here relentlessly vindicated. It depended for its thoroughness, of course, on the fact that hardly a Nazi plane was in the air, and that aerodromes could be quickly built and operated without the enemy even knowing they were there. Among other devices we see a new type of runway called a "stamp-licker": within a few hours an open field is covered with a sort of giant adhesive-plaster laid in strips. The commentary of *Air Plan*, a workmanlike production by R.A.F. Film Unit, is well spoken by Eric Portman. In the same programme there is a sumptuous if not very exciting English "musical" for those who enjoy waltz time in old Wardour Street. You should see the Empress reviewing her Imperial Guard, and changing bridegrooms on the steps of the cathedral, all of them singing at full tilt! The voices are pretty good for this sort of thing, and Richard Tauber, whose name appears in very big print, has a very small part.

Blood on the Sun has the distinction of being the first film to give us a genuine peep behind the scenes in Japan. I don't know how far the detail of Japanese manners (Tokyo, 1928) is accurate, but it is convincing enough to double the excitements of this thriller, directed by Frank Lloyd. The ju-jitsu school and the communal bath, top hat and kimono, plans for world conquest, toothy smiles, old-fashioned colloquialisms, and a new wiliness in Gestapo methods lead up to the ceremonial suicide of the Prime Minister. Such words as *judo* and *sampan* add flavour to the synopsis. That doesn't preclude the appearance of a beautiful international spy (Miss Sylvia Sidney) playing the usual double game, and what thriller would be complete without the lovers embracing timelessly at the moment of greatest danger? And the hero, of course, is lucky, when cornered, to find an adversary who will throw away his gun to enjoy the thrills of hand-to-hand combat. As if to rub in the point, he gets off with a scratch from a machine-gun trained on him as he walks away in an open square. Since the hero is Mr. James Cagney, tough, fresh and engaging as ever, we don't complain.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"A Cure for Love," at the Westminster

"This play gets off to a slow start," said my friend, who has a passion for clichés, and he started to wonder how many premières a first-nighter must attend before he could call himself inveterate. As the curtain goes up and the "thee-ers" and the "ee-lass-ers" and the gossips and the shawls come on the spirits droop: it is too like getting out of the station at North Road, Manchester. At first even Miss Renée Asherson is disappointing. We have been longing to see her in the flesh ever since she was learning to say *de Sin*, *de Nick* and *de Bilbow* in *Henry V*. In *The Way to the Stars*, Derek Williams's camera, so successful with the bleakness of R.A.F. hutments at Catterick, failed to draw the fascinating inequalities of Miss Asherson's beauty. Now her looks are restored, but why is she talking in that gruff voice? Because she is not only the nice girl from the South, destined to marry the hero; she must also offset Northern manners by her Southern spontaneity and lively Cockney accents. Now there are almost as many dialects of London as there are postal districts, but instead of assuming one of the five most easily imitable types, Miss Asherson struggles with a generalised baritone "off"-ness, or eastern growl. "Is a comedy of Lancashire Life a worthy vehicle," began the cliché expert "for the return of Robert D—" At the words Donat entered, brown and handsome from the wars, and as in Manchester, when you get used to it, the external gloom is dispelled by inner warmth. Robert Donat, as the soldier returned, acts with unpretentious charm and a warm-hearted sense of comedy, while he breaks away from the wrong girl to find the right one. Both Donat and the author, Walter Greenwood, are capable of dealing with this situation a great deal more sympathetically than they have here, but they must not be criticised for not achieving what they did not set out to do. This play is near-farce, and seems not so much to have been written as accreted, on tour and in rehearsal, by adepts in theatrical business. The shape has suffered; situations are not tied up or paid off neatly enough; actors are left hanging about too long for their exit lines: but the audience is left very pleased and amused, all the same. Mr. Donat is not the only fine actor. Indeed, acting scarcely seems the word for the performances of the mother or the pub landlord. It needs a definite act of the imagination to realise that Miss Rhodes is not still cooking hot-pots and that Mr. Victor has stopped serving small ports and large whiskies after the curtain has finally fallen. "And this young actress will go from strength to strength," said my friend. In spite of the strange voice, one notices that Miss Asherson not only has youth, she can also act youth. Like Cordelia's, her pauses are so ardent and her silences so vivid that she seems to have more lines than are actually written for her.

STEPHEN POTTER

Ballets Jooss, at the Winter Garden.

The style of dancing, with its strong emphasis on mime, may not be to everyone's taste; but there is no doubt that in times like these, when conditions make it all but impossible to train a satisfactory ensemble in the classical style, there is a good deal to be said for the compromise arrived at by Kurt Jooss. This is seen at its best, not in the rather irritating, Sunday-painterish naivety of ballets like *The Seven Heroes*, but in the more ambitious, serious pieces: *The Green Table*, which still remains Mr. Jooss's most outstanding work, and *Pandora*, which, in spite of some very ugly costumes and considerable discrepancy between the dramatic plot and the rather vague design of the choreography, does achieve an emotional effect of some power. This is in no small measure due to the beautiful and imaginative music of Roberto Gerhard, a Spanish composer who has made his home in this country. Mr. Gerhard employs a modern idiom of a very personal kind; though sometimes angular it is never ugly, because the writing and the texture are masterly in their manipulation of orchestral timbres. *Pandora* contains some very beautiful moments, both musical and choreographic; the score, which has a symphonic amplitude, holds it together, while remaining always ballet music in its attention to variety and definiteness of rhythm. Why does not Sadler's Wells commission a ballet from this brilliant composer? The slender orchestral ensemble whi the Ballets Jooss have been able to acquire, manag this very difficult score far better than was to b expected in the circumstances.

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"John Armstrong," at the Lefevre

Mr. Armstrong has hit upon a new way of painting he uses tempera to imitate mosaic. The notion seem rather perverse, but the result is to produce a pleasant shimmery effect, akin to pointillism. Some of th architecture depicted and the elongated figures wi disproportionately small heads confess the influenc of Byzantium, but not so the drapery, which is curvilinear and suggests an arrested fluttering. Mr Armstrong also furnishes his pictures with curiou sistrum-like objects, which may be thought eithe enigmatic or voguish. His craftsmanship is remarkable, but his aim seems to be more than purely pictoria The paintings are "literary" in the sense that th imaginary world they project seems fraught with a undefined symbolism. (Only one of them offers a informative title: "War and Revolution dedicatin the emblems of the people to peace.") One is left therefore, suspecting that the painter has a message but ignorant of what that message may be. Judged as decoration the most successful pictures are thos in which the contrasts of tone and colour are leas emphatic. *Seaweed Gatherers* is one of a group tha thus satisfy the eye without seeming oracular.

Correspondence

INDIAN PRISONS

SIR,—I protest at D. M. Sen's letter in your las issue. It charges the prison authorities in Midnapore Dacca and the Andamans with sadistic cruelties a bad as those of Buchenwald. It implies that thes cruelties are continuing. It further implies that th victims are Indians and that the people responsibl are British. "These cases have been reported in th Indian Press, and will in no sense seem like revelations to Indians." And elsewhere, "If the peopl of Britain have now been roused by these savageries let us put an end to cruelty everywhere," etc. Bu Midnapore and Dacca are both in Bengal, which except for a temporary breakdown during the la few months, has for years been under an India Provincial Government, responsible for "law an order," including prison management. Why, then if these atrocities are practised, do Indians tolera them? And why does the NEW STATESMAN AN NATION publish this letter, without a word of editori comment or substantiating evidence, knowing that i is sure to be read by uninformed people here and sti more in America, who will draw the conclusion tha this is another proof of British hypocrisy and misrule in India?

ELEANOR RATHBONE

26, Hampstead Lane,
Highgate, N.6.

[Miss Rathbone, for whose opinion we have grea respect, not only queries the allegations in Mr. Sen' letter, but suggests that we were wrong in publishin them. On this point we cannot agree. Mr. Sen, a Oxford resident known to us, wrote his letter as a repl to Critic's rebuttal of a suggestion that there coul be any comparison between the horrors of Buchenwal and anything done in Indian prisons. To hav refused to publish Mr. Sen's letter would only hav confirmed the current Indian view that the Britis avert their eyes from what is happening in Indi We hope that Mr. Sen's charges will be investigated

Miss Rathbone is surely wrong in arguing tha accusations of this nature should not be publishe because of their effect on American and other foreig opinion. It is well understood that our correspondenc columns are open to views that are not in any wa endorsed by the Editor, and to refuse to publish suc letters for fear of foreign opinion would act as a effective form of censorship over all domestic an imperial criticism. It would also have the ver opposite result to that which Miss Rathbone desire Allegations of this type are published in the India press and already widely disseminated in the Unite States. Every time they are honestly published an met in this country a blow is struck against anti British propaganda in America, where many peopl believe not only that these things are true, but als that they are deliberately hidden from the Britis public.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

DEAD CITIES?

SIR,—A tribute to the power of Peter de Mendelssohn's magnificent article, which has released this poem after three years' silence.

Faceless and featureless the cities lie,
bald bones and rubble bleaching in the sun.
No life save where the groundsel has begun,
or on some broken sill a butterfly.

Nothing to meet the hushed and silent gaze,
a single church spire crowns the wilderness.
Roads are abstractions running into space
connecting nothingness with nothingness.

Fifty years hence a traveller in that land,
passing the sunny vineyards and the mounds
now green and gold with harvest—will he stand

amazed to see that church spire in the corn
and hear, beneath the day's familiar sounds,
a voice that speaks of Ur and Babylon?

R. F. C. H.

SIR,—I read with much interest but some dismay the article in your last issue on the Dead Cities of Germany. Having just returned from a tour of Germany that covered over 3,500 miles, and included all but one of the cities mentioned by your contributor, and many others he does not name, I find his description effective but overdrawn. Let me agree at once that the least damaged German city is probably in much worse condition than any in England, and that there are areas in most German cities to which his account is literally applicable. Yet when I consider the cities individually it is only Kassel that I recognise in the portrait, and even in Kassel the bricks were being stacked in orderly piles ready for re-use. (I did not visit Hamburg or Pförzheim; the latter, I have been given to understand, represents the pinnacle—or abyss—of achievement in this field.) Who, reading Mr. de Mendelssohn's article, would realise that a fortnight ago I occupied a bedroom on the fourth floor of a luxury hotel opposite the station in Stuttgart, and did not object to the height because the lift was working efficiently? Or that in the same hotel about 250 German workmen were rapidly repairing the splintered doors, broken plaster, and fallen ceilings, that still required attention? Or that in any one of three large hotels around the station at Frankfurt one can see at the reception desk a list of twenty or thirty picture-houses, theatres, night clubs, and the like where the residents can find diversion of an evening?

Most people in Britain know little of the conditions of life in Germany to-day, and in these circumstances an objective statement of the facts, however prosaic, would surely be of more value than a piece of imaginative writing, however effective. The truth is grim enough.

A. R. URQUHART

Fulwood, Hall Park, Lancaster.

[We agree with Mr. Urquhart that Mr. de Mendelssohn probably underestimated the possibilities of fairly rapid patching-up in many of Germany's Dead Cities. Who, after visiting Coventry in November 1941, could believe that it would be working again in three months' time? But for any return to normal peacetime conditions, such short-term repairs are ineffective. There are theatres, picture-houses and night clubs in Germany—improvised in many cases in cellars and buildings which serve the purpose for the moment. Human beings can and do survive in the Dead Cities, and Mr. de Mendelssohn stressed this in his article. But to advance from survival to something approaching normal life does seem, as he argues, a superhuman task.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

"YOGI AND THE COMMISSAR"

SIR,—Revelations in regard to Russia are again the fashion. The novel trait is the emphasis laid by the crusaders on the defence of Western standards of intellectual integrity. The crusaders level amazing charges and treat the sceptical as "Soviet addicts." An example of the manner in which facts and inferences from facts are being fused in order to arrive at the desired conclusions, is to be found in Arthur Koestler's recent book which was most objectively reviewed by Leonard Woolf in your journal. Koestler reports about the U.S.S.R. that "capital punishment has been extended to children down to the age of twelve;" they "are being dealt with by the firing squad." (*The Yogi and the Commissar*, p. 170.) He adduces a decree of 1935, the text of which he quotes as conclusive proof that Russia has now dropped all pretence of progressive cultural principles, and is sinking, at least in respect to the treatment of juveniles, below the level of any uncivilised country.

What are the facts? Up to 1935 juvenile criminality was dealt with in the U.S.S.R. not by the Courts, as in other countries, but by the educational authorities. In that year the system was changed, since experience showed that the "criminal underworld" was deliberately making use of the children thus exempted. Two important rulings were made: (1) heavy penalties were introduced for adults, who induced juveniles to crime or to prostitution, even if they were not responsible for the juveniles, and had not themselves participated in the crime. The penalty in some cases equalled that for murder. (2) The Criminal Code was extended to juveniles in the case of theft or crimes committed by violence. In extension of the decree special courts for juveniles were established at the ordinary courts as in other countries. The juveniles who were formally sentenced to imprisonment were committed for re-education to Approved Schools similar to Borstal, if allowance is made for the admittedly more modern methods of the Russians in dealing with offenders during detention and after. Hypothetically, the juridical position involved the possibility of applying the death penalty, since the decree, *taken by itself*, could be so construed. So far only does Koestler's assertion bear reference to fact. Actually, the criminal code in Russia does not provide for capital punishment for common crime, even in case of murder—a circumstance of which Koestler fails to remind the reader. Of all the crimes for which juveniles may conceivably have to answer under the decree of 1935, robbery committed by organised armed gangs (banditism) is the only one to which capital punishment may be applicable.

Koestler infers that interest in the application of progressive principles of criminology had been dropped in Russia. As a matter of fact, the sociological relevance of the decree of 1935 lay in the circumstance that it formed part of *a set of measures* based on advanced principles. These took note of the existence of a "criminal underworld" against which both the juvenile and society had to be protected. As long as the juvenile was practically free to return from the educational home to his underworld haunts and the adult members of the criminal world were free to use him as an agent of crime (since he was expressly exempted from punishment under the law) it was in many cases hopeless to try to prevent the juvenile from reverting to crime. The principle of merely individual treatment of the juvenile had broken down and had to be abandoned in favour of his protection against a criminal environment while maintaining the aim of his re-education. Clearly, the *rationale* of the 1935 decree was to reinforce the risk for an adult who invited the juvenile to commit a crime. So far to my knowledge no serious allegation has ever been made that juveniles have been shot under this decree, which was passed ten years ago. On the other hand, I note in the semi-official Czech review *Central European Observer* of June 29th, an editorial article on "Russia and her German prisoners." I quote an incidental statement from this apparently authoritative article:

> The criminals are to be dealt with on a strictly legal basis and their guilt established. There is, however, an important exception to this

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JONATHAN CAPE

rule: the very young. Many who delighted in shocking cruelties are only 14-16 years old, since nearly all the boys between 14 and 16 were recruited for the Waffen S.S. *Under Russian law no young person can be faced with a capital charge* (my italics). The Soviet authorities have asked a number of pedagogues to make proposals as to what is to be done with these politically and morally neglected youngsters."

Highgate. **Karl Polanyi**

POLITICAL POLICE

Sir,—The Tories have made much of the suggestion that a Socialist Britain will mean a Political Police, a Gestapo. I want to know if we have had one for years, mostly under a Tory Government. For men who seem to know the ropes say that the Home Office has a room in which the dossier of every known Left-wing speaker and writer is filed. If this is so, who compiled this list? Surely not the civil police. If this is so, will Labour, if it wins, abolish this alleged piece of Gestapoism, or failing abolition, will it add the names of the better known Right-wing speakers and writers? The answer is of the greatest importance, for, had Hitler invaded in 1940 and taken London, all the Left-wing biographies would have helped him a lot. There may be no truth in the report, but if there is, what is democracy doing that it tolerates a secret police?

A. S. Neill

EDWARD WHITLEY

Sir,—In your notice about Edward Whitley, nothing was said about the scientific side of his life and about his interest in Biochemistry. Early in this century his interest in Biochemistry was kindled by Professor Ramsden at Oxford, while he was an undergraduate at Trinity College, and he took the Final Honour School in Physiology. Following this he worked in the newly developing Department of Biochemistry at Liverpool with Professor Benjamin Moore, F.R.S., and other colleagues, taking especial interest in problems related to the growth of marine organisms. In 1906, the first volume of the Biochemical Journal was launched by Professor Benjamin Moore and Mr. Edward Whitley, a journal which has proved so successful that it was taken over in 1913 by the Biochemical Society shortly after its formation. This journal is now recognised as one of the leading journals in this active and growing subject; the Biochemical Society, which still controls it, now has over 1,000 members. During the last war Mr. Whitley worked with Professor Ramsden and colleagues at Liverpool upon the estimation of quinine. In 1920, he was instrumental in the founding of the Whitley Chair of Biochemistry at Oxford, of which the first holder was Professor Benjamin Moore. Subsequently, during the tenure of the present holder of the Chair, he acted as University Demonstrator. There is no doubt that his interest and generous support have done much to further the progress of biochemistry. In this field there are now hundreds of research workers; the growth of this borderline subject has been one of the astonishing achievements of a scientifically vigorous age.

Department of Biochemistry, **R. A. Peters**
Oxford.

MORRISON AND EAST LEWISHAM.

Sir,—"M.C." states he has been told that the Tories in East Lewisham had been making much use of Mr. Herbert Morrison having been a conscientious objector in the last war.

As the Conservative candidate will you allow me to say that I never made any allusion to this fact, that all those who came to speak for me were asked not to do so, and did not do so, and that so far as I am aware no mention was made of it by those working for me?

Assheton Pownall

SPLIT VOTES

Sir,—Sidney Dark is quite right about the confusion caused by split votes and, in particular, by my intervention in the East Hants contest, but there are one or two more things which need to be said.

The confusion was heightened by the obstinacy of one or two prominent individuals, including a regular contributor to your columns, who confessed to me their belief that the Liberal programme was all that could be desired or achieved for the present, and used their reputations as Socialists to persuade Labour supporters to vote Liberal. It was also increased by the fact that the Labour Party organisation, on which I had relied to help me spread the Socialist basis of Common Wealth policy, turned out to be non-existent except for a few scattered individuals and a group in Petersfield who gave me amazingly enthusiastic help.

Nevertheless, it gradually became plain in most parts of the division that, of the two Left candidates, one was paying lip-service to Churchill and upholding private enterprise, while the other was opposing Churchill and preaching Socialism. In consequence the enthusiasm, and later the attendance, at my meetings was greater than at those of the other candidates. The volunteer helpers in Petersfield alone got out all our Election addresses with days to spare, and we were able to hold up to eight meetings a night.

Had there been evidence that the policy and personality of the Liberal candidate were such as to arouse real enthusiasm for the cause of the people against their masters, I would not have gone on with the fight, despite having given up the chance of victory in a seat which I had fought and nursed for two years. But the Liberalism which puts forward "beating the Tory" as its main aim and which hopes to win Tory votes by not appearing extreme is a menace to the political salvation of this country. As I put it during my campaign, "Any politician who comes and promises you the kind of world you want and who pretends it can be obtained without destroying the power of property and without a change of economic motives is leading you up the garden and can do nothing for you."

Sidney Dark need not be pessimistic about the result. He is right in saying that the countryside can be won for Socialism, and the foundations for such a victory have now been laid in his own constituency, as well as in many others.

Tom Sargent

DUTCH RELIEF.

Sir,—Before leaving for a short visit to the West Indies and the U.S.A., the Netherlands Welfare Commissioner, Lt.-Colonel A. M. Meerloo, asked me to submit the following message to you in the hope that you would be able to make it known to your readers.

"In response to my earlier letters which appeared in this journal, I have received a really magnificent collection of relief goods from donors all over the country.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my warmest thanks to all those who preferred that their generosity should remain anonymous. Through their kindness they have helped to alleviate the sufferings of countless people. I have also received quite a number of parcels from contributors whose addresses were illegible or insufficient. I was indeed sorry not to be able to acknowledge their gifts, but I should like them to know how deeply they were appreciated. No words of mine can fully express the feelings of thankfulness with which these gifts are received by my countrymen, who for so long suffered hardship and privation at the hands of a ruthless enemy, in many cases deprived of even the simplest necessities of life. By the wholehearted generosity of these, our British comrades, a strong link of friendship has been forged between the two countries."

Clothes and money are still needed by the people in the Netherlands, especially in preparation for the difficult winter that lies ahead. If in their great generosity the British friends of Holland can make still further gifts, I would ask them to deal directly with the Help Holland Council, Norman House 105-109, Strand, London, W.C.2.

Prof. Dr. J. H. de Boer, Colonel
Netherlands Military Administration

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Few have had the courage to write a detailed study of illness from the patient's point of view. Of the older writers Burton is too objective to enter the category; nor would I count the drug-addicts who, from Crabbe and De Quincey onwards, have extended the scope of poetry with the visions of their torture and ecstasy. Illness often, of course, includes extremes of sensation, though of a different nature; but more psychologically interesting, and much less often expatiated on, are the day-to-day results of a chronic battle against ill-health. "The tedious thing about illness," said Flaubert, "is that you have to take the trouble to get well, and it is then that you feel the weight of mere existence." No doubt; but the tedium felt by basically healthy people who know they will eventually recover completely, however troublesome their complaint, is as nothing compared to the Sisyphean task imposed on those who know their condition to be insusceptible of any but slight temporary improvement, as long as they live. It is this razor-edge condition, usually referred to by sufferers as simply "feeling ill," that is difficult to describe because of its lack of positive features. Yet a few important writers have touched upon it, usually as part of a larger context: one thinks of Montaigne, of Amiel, of Rilke (in *Malte Laurids Brigge*), of D. H. Lawrence (in his Letters), of Karinthy's *Journey Round My Skull*,—especially perhaps of Virginia Woolf, whose essay "On Being Ill," says some new things and is admirably accurate. This is a capital point. Objectivity is here neither possible nor really to be desired; but it is important to be very precise. Precision in this case involves an intensity of concentration that is not always available. What has to be charted is a graph of awareness: the patient is always more or less concerned to discover the point beyond which he knows he can no longer guarantee the minimum integration of thought and feeling; and it was because she felt herself approaching the region (she had been there before) where such a guarantee becomes permanently impossible, that Virginia Woolf decided upon a courageous abdication—all the more courageous because she knew well that obtuse people would call it the reverse.

In a sense, then, a permanent watch upon the validity of this guarantee is the principal—often the only—activity of an invalid's existence; it is his "moment of truth," his ambition. Life, which once seemed a rocket-shower of beautiful possibilities, is narrowed into a focus so tiny that he is obliged to develop some day-dream or other with which to counterbalance this exasperating stint. W. N. P. Barbellion, who wrote the *Journal of a Disappointed Man*, who died before he was thirty of pulmonary tuberculosis, who despite this made a small but definite name for himself as a biologist, has described the battle with this particular angel so accurately and comprehensively that not much remains to be added to his account. The *Journal* is a minor classic; it is also one of the most depressing books ever written, partly because Barbellion lost his battle, partly because there was something in him which wanted to lose it, as well as much more that wanted to win.

> The intense internal life I lead, worrying about my health, reading (eternally reading), reflecting, observing, feeling, loving and hating—with no outlet for superfluous steam, cramped and confined on every side, without any friends or influence of any sort, without even any acquaintances excepting my colleagues in journalism (whom I contemn)—all this will turn me into the most self-conscious, conceited, mawkish, gauche creature in existence.

His dread was not unfounded, although his self-pity bred a self-contempt which prevented him—except in rare moments of physical ease—from recognising his own unquestionable superiority of mind and spirit. The next entry, dated a month later, gives another turn to the screw.

> The facts are undeniable: Life is pain. No sophistry can win me over to any other view. And yet years ago I set out so hopefully and healthfully—what are birds' eggs to me *now*? My ambition is enormous but vague. I am too distributed in my abilities ever to achieve distinction.

That was in 1910. Barbellion was twenty, and had barely seven more years to live. Probably the happiest hours of his life, apart from those which his wife helped him to snatch from death, were those of his boyhood, before his body began to assert its tedious presence—hours spent in observing birds and insects in the West Country. It is clear that such a man ought never to attempt to live in a town—above all, not in London, for many years Barbellion's exterior prison. But poverty nagged—as it had nagged George Gissing, another of fate's victims of whom the *Journal* irresistibly reminds one. There is about these unfortunate men a peculiar aura of ill-ventilated middle-class misery, so much more distressing to read about, because of its pathetic attachment to intangible values, than the cruder wretchedness of the very poor whose lives are more liable to be suddenly brimmed by some concrete satisfaction. The world of the genteel boarding-house, with its livid gaslight, shooting-gallery ornaments, bamboo furniture and hairy sofas, its smell of cabbage and stewed steak and Jeyes' Fluid; its grimy windows, creaking wardrobe and looking-glass which tips forward; its brown-leaved fern, its gamboge cake from the grocer's; a world where lovers hold timid hands over a plopping gas-fire and where those whom love has ignored hug to their scrannel bosoms some political or religious quackery: this was the world, and this the atmosphere, in which the pathetic symphony of Barbellion's life faltered to its grim conclusion. It is a picture by Sickert, of the Camden Town period. The early volumes of Miss Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, and Mr. William Plomer's *The Case is Altered*, are there for those who wish to document themselves still more fully in the evasions of this repellent milieu; but in Barbellion's case the surroundings do not loom so large because his illness, and its attendant self-absorption, burst the gimcrack framework of his life. His standard of happiness was not really low, in spite of references to "dream pictures of a quiet studious life in the Cromwell Road," and a taste for the milk-and-soda ecstasies of Eugénie de Guérin: not low, because of his bright peculiar gift, his microscopic eye; because he so evidently loved the highest when he saw it—which was seldom, though that was hardly his fault; and ultimately because he fought his battle with the angel so angrily and with such unflinching perception.

When the *Journal* was first published, many readers were, I recall, shocked by its egotism, to which, indeed, Barbellion himself draws constant attention. I wonder now what those readers expected, in the circumstances. Healthy people are judged by what they do, sick people by what they say; and surely the value of that resides in its honesty. But Barbellion is more than honest: his introspection has that super-charged quality, often found in German and Russian, but very seldom in English, literature—at all events since understatement became a national characteristic. It was not an accident that Barbellion saw himself reflected in Lermontov and Marie Bashkirtsev. Let me collate a few examples from the *Journal*:—

> Feel like a piece of drawn threadwork, or an undeveloped negative, or a jelly fish on stilts, or a sloppy tadpole, or a weevil in a nut, or a spitch-cocked eel. In other words and in short—ill.
>
> Before now I have tried going off to bed. But that does not work—I don't sleep. Moreover, I have been in the grip of a horrible mental unrest. To sit still in my chair, much less to lie in bed doing nothing seemed ghastly. I experienced all the cravings of a dissolute neurotic for a stimulus, but what stimulus I wanted I did not know. Had I known I should have gone and got it. The dipsomaniac was a man to be envied.
>
> *February* 20.
>
> Am feeling very unwell. My ill-health, my isolation, baulked ambitions, and daily bread-winning, all conspire to bring me down. The idea of a pistol and the end of it grows on me day by day.
>
> *February* 21.
>
> After four days of the most profound depression of spirits, bitterness, self-distrust, despair, I emerged from the cloud to-day quite suddenly (probably the arsenic and strychnine begin to take effect) and walked up to Exhibition Road with the intention of visiting the Science Museum Library so as to refer to Schaefer's *Essentials of Histology* (I have to watch myself carefully so that I may act *at once* as soon as the balance of mind is restored).

So many rubrics for an anthology of Discomfort. . . . But, unlike other writers on illness, who dance round the subject, or embroider it, Barbellion pierces to the inmost cell—that of nervous depression, which is the ultimate, featureless hell always liable to open and swallow up the sufferer. This prison is perfect. No warder is needed, because there is no door; no light, because there is no window, and printed words might be in Etruscan, for all the pleasure or instruction they communicate; no sound, except the lame Alexandrine of the blood; nothing but sensation—the body crammed with milling centipedes, from the roots of the hair to the soles of the feet. In such case nobility of nature can assert itself only in gestures of despair. The voice crying, "This is not I!" recedes beyond human earshot. But, because this horror must somehow be expressed, its results excused, the hand continues to write:—

> My sympathy with myself is so unfailing that I don't deserve anybody else's. In many respects, however, this Journal I believe gives the impression that I behave myself in the public gaze much worse than I actually do. You must remember that herein I let myself go at a stretch gallop: in life I rein in, I am almost another person. Here I stand revealed as a contemptuous, arrogant malcontent. My life has embittered me *au fond*, I have the crabbed temper of the disappointed man insufficiently developed yet to be very plainly visible beneath my innate affable, unassuming, humble, diffident, cheerful characteristics.

To complain of the egotism of such passages is beside the point; even so, no reader can fail to be struck by the scarcity of references to the 1914-18 war, the course of which coincided with more than half of this *Journal*. But it is in the nature of illness to exclude what interests the well: "Nothing matters, provided the tongue is not furred" (March, 1915). There is the truth; to have stated it so baldly is perhaps shocking, but also courageous, since it is evident that Barbellion was acutely aware of the impression his *Journal* would create, as well as anxious that he should be given the benefit of the doubt. In the long run I believe he will be justified in his hopes, because fundamentally he was not disconnected either by illness or by temperament from love in any of its aspects.

> This morning how desirable everything seemed to me! The world intoxicated me. Moving again among so many human beings gave me the crowd fever, and started again all the pangs of the old familiar hunger for a fuller life that centrifugal *élan* in which I feared for the disruption and scattering of my parts in all directions. Temporarily I lost the hegemony of my own soul. Every man and woman I met was my enemy, threatening me with the secession of some inward part. I was alarmed to discover how many women I could passionately love and with how many men I could form a lasting friendship. Within, all was anarchy and commotion, a cold fright seized me lest some extraordinary event was about to happen: some general histolysis of my body, some sudden disintegration of my personality, some madness, some strange death. . . . I wanted to crush out the life of all these men and women in a great Bear's hug, my God! this sea of human faces whom I can never recognise, all of us alive together beneath this yellow catafalque of fog on the morning of the announcement of world famine and world war! . . .

A passage like that throws all the windows wide open: the Cromwell Road, the stuffy lodging-house, disappear in a flash, and the free gift of humanity is revealed as the superpersonal spirit it is.

But our beginning is also our end. The child of thirteen who noted: "*Sept.* 8: Toothache.

Sept. 9: Toothache. *Sept.* 10: Toothache. *Sept.* 11: Toothache"—was father to the man who closed his *Journal*, thirteen years later, with the entries: "*Oct.* 14–20: Miserable. *Oct.* 21: Self-disgust." It is the dates which horrify: six whole days given over to one ungovernable, destructive emotion. And then another. Then silence, for two months; and after that, death.

PAUL DOMBEY

EAST ANGLIAN LIGHTS

Looming Lights: A True Story of the Lightships. By GEORGE G. CARTER. With an introduction by SIR GEOFFREY CALLENDER. *Constable.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Misleading title—more misleading cover! One learns to reject books, like people, by their dress, and here at a glance is something togged up: look at that flashy blue sky and poster lightship, crude colour, ugly lettering! Seeing the wrapper among others on a bookstall, one would hesitate to inquire further for fear of the bad writing and microscopic print within. Not at all how it turns out. The introduction establishes new ground with its technical description. We learn about early lightships built of oak, and illuminated by wax candles; about Trinity House, sandbanks, royal charters, the advent of steel and electricity, the testing nature of the job, to which in wartime was added indiscriminate bombing from the air. *Looming Lights*—so apparently melodramatic on the cover—is itself a technical term, to "loom" meaning to become visible beyond the usual limits of the horizon. Sir Geoffrey Callender cites the case of the light at St. Catherine's Point, Isle of Wight, with a normal visibility at sea of a little over five miles, which has been seen many times from the Channel Isles, seventy miles away. After reading the admirable introduction (which also briefly introduces the author in terms of warm praise) one throws away the book-jacket and settles down.

But still it is a different book from what one has been led, up to that point, to expect. The lightships aren't reached till the last third of the narrative, which begins—how tersely and inventively!—with childhood in Aldeburgh. This is the Borough of which Crabbe wrote, with its sea walls, its estuary, its weatherstained Gothic church, its half-sunk buildings by the shore, where among corks and nets the "squalid sea-dames mend the meshy work" and look up to see a solitary oyster-dredger swigging his last drop of gin, or Peter Grimes, glaring in midstream at the dripping ghosts of his apprentices. Crabbe's picture is not altogether dark; he relishes the flats and the neighbouring walks, the battered courage of the fishermen. From that "wild, artful, surly and savage race" Mr. George Carter descends (it is an incongruity that his middle name should be Goldsmith), and while its inhabitants may be luckier and more amiable than their forbears, neither they nor Aldeburgh seem to have changed a great deal. Its life, says Mr. Carter, is dominated by three things: the sea—"it is a sea-haunted town, living on borrowed time . . . the tides have eaten their way inland, so that buildings, once miles from the shore, are now tottering on the very margin of the beach. Even the main street is undermined by salt water"; the loneliness of sand-dunes and marsh and sky; the lights that "loom" from every quarter of the compass except the West. This isolation, destructive of so much, has preserved charm:

> Aldeburgh to-day has an unhurried atmosphere of the eighteenth century. Folk pass leisurely to and fro across the Broad Street to the tiny shops. They climb the Town Steps to the terrace above. The Town Crier, complete with bell, still conveys the news to the inhabitants. The town is "out of time. . . ."

The summer regattas and the fairs added gaiety to old fashion. Fishing for herring, wild-fowling, eel-pritching, wild seas and tales of the great storms, the fascination of tackle and craft that made a living museum of the cottage where Mr. Carter passed his boyhood: all these gather to an individuality as tangy as the local speech—"Ah, Bor', the shoals are peeling by the sound of it. Maybe we'll hear the life-gun to-day!" Mr. Carter tells us remarkably little about himself—we gather that he was brought up by his grandfather, and afterwards that he married happily—but such facts slip out sideways; our attention is fixed on a way of life and the legend attached to it. The "clock-calm" or pounding seas bring whiffs of the Norsemen; Dutch settlers built the sea-wall; and on dark nights the old dread of French landing parties would make people hurry uneasily. Mr. Carter is possessed by this theme and has the right words for it. This first part of his book should take a place with the best writing of its kind: George Sturt's the wheelwright's shop, for example. It is no affectation that in one passage he should refer to Crabbe as "our local poet."

By comparison the second and third parts—devoted to a variety of sea-going travel, and finally to the lightships—make a less deep impression, though the writing is always terse and the adventures thrill. We learn a great deal about life on a lightship—a monkish existence with its own laws and observances, as narrow as the horizon is wide; but interesting, true though the experience is, it lacks the illumination of memory. When, on shore leave, Mr. Carter goes back to visit Aldeburgh, we expect almost a revelation; but the scene has gone flat, it is wartime, there's nothing to do except gape at holes made by the bombing and fill up with beer. I don't mean to suggest that two-thirds of Mr. Carter's story is anticlimax. It should be put the other way; his beginning has the sort of excellence for which it is hard to provide a sequel. The book does, in fact, end notably with a description of Nazi bombing attacks and the undertow of the author's brooding loneliness.

Mr. Carter is a writer who mustn't be let go. He could write more about childhood; there is a whole phase of living he could put on the map, with the most meticulous of contours, before they vanish. He is a man of one subject, perhaps, but of more, let us hope, than one book.

G. W. STONIER

THE BLACK BOGY

The Nazis Go Underground. By CURT RIESS. *Boardman.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

In his Foreword the author states that in writing *The Nazis Go Underground*—first published in America in 1944—he had access to the reports of over fifty Allied Intelligence Services working inside Germany. This remarkable claim may mislead the reader into believing that Mr. Riess's detailed picture of Himmler's plans is based on hard evidence. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Either he never had access to any reliable secret sources, or he is a very poor judge of the value of such reports. He apparently believes, for instance, that Himmler created the *Landwacht* in order to provide Military Government with a ready-made police force; and he states in another passage that von Papen's office at Ankara will be maintained after defeat as the headquarters of sabotage against the whole British Empire. Amusingly enough, the only reports which he nails as obvious Nazi propaganda are those which quite correctly anticipated the events of July 20th, 1944.

The Nazis Go Underground would be beneath notice if it were not typical of a whole class of writings on Germany which claim to be based on inside knowledge. The object of most of them seems to be to toughen up the American public by horrific pictures of the underground Nazi movement in operation against us. If any credence were given to writers like Curt Riess, who still argues that it is not a question of what we do to Germany but of what Germany does to us, the consequences would probably be the opposite of those intended. If the S.S. really possessed the powers of underground organisation ascribed to it, and if "every German wh feels and acts in a way that can be termed patriotic, is a potential member of the army of th Nazi underground," then the task of holding Germany down or re-educating her is completel hopeless from the start. Fortunately, anyone wh has had an opportunity of studying some of th secret reports, to which Mr. Riess refers, wil testify to the melodramatic unreliability of th picture he draws.

In sober fact, the surprising feature of Naz Germany was the inability of Himmler to organis in advance of defeat either widespread guerrill resistance of the *Werewolf* type or undergroun sabotage. There is no evidence that cadres o the Party or S.S. made any real effort to go underground. They had become part of the Nazi state and when the state collapsed, they, too, disintegrated, leaving tens of thousands of individual and groups without a central rallying point. Tha is why the sporadic opposition which now exist need cause no alarm as long as the occupyin Powers remain united.

There is, therefore, no danger, as Mr. Ries pretends, that Himmler's S.S. will emerge one fin day from a secret hiding place to rebuild th Third Reich. What is possible is that the Germa nation may divide the Russians from ourselve and ally itself with one side or the other in th third world war. But for this no S.S. Underground is required. The Fourth Reich, if it i permitted to arise, will be either "Communist" and anti-Western, or "democratic" and anti-Russian. It will not be Nazi. Hitlerism has no gone underground, as Mr. Riess and other American writers will have us believe. It is dead and buried as a political factor. But allied stupidity can permit a new form of German nationalism to grow upon its grave. The real danger is above ground, not below it.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

SHORT STORIES

Travellers. By L. A. G. STRONG. *Methuen.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Wide Net. By EUDORA WELTY. *Th Bodley Head.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Water Music. By GLYN JONES. *Routledge.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. L. A. G. Strong's short stories are of an old-fashioned type; those of Miss Welty and Mr. Jones are of a new. Most short stories of to-day stand somewhere in between. Few writers round off their stories in the dashing, efficient way that Mr. Strong does; few go so far as Miss Welty and Mr. Jones in the direction of poetry. It is a fashion at the moment to offer as a short story almost any small piece of reportage, and the war, though it did not produce the fashion, has inevitably developed it. To the little, pre-war basic themes (themselves hang-overs from their authors' schooldays) of the Happiest, or Unhappiest, Day in the Holidays, An Afternoon at Uncle's, and A Day in the Country, there have come to be added the little mid-war basic themes of the First Day in the Army, The First Big Fire, A Trip in an Arctic Convoy and A Night Ashore. They produce, it is needless to say, literature at its most tentative and least readable. To turn to the wideawake, assured and professional pages of Mr. Strong is, at first, refreshing. *Travellers* is a book of thirty-one stories collected from previous volumes; it begins well with "The English Captain," a story sufficiently graceful and charming in its evocation of a boyhood in Dublin to dispe the slight uneasiness one may feel at its sentimentality. In the second story one's uneasiness increases; there are purple patches about a storm, and one is conscious of cheaply exaggerated effects. And rarely does one feel at ease in Mr. Strong's other stories. There are excellent and original exceptions, such as "Prongs," "The Fort," "The Big Man"; the dialogue in all of them is lively and credible, the frequent memories of childhood are convincing; but for the most part one is aware of the mechanical nature of the inventions, of a reluctance, or an incapacity, to penetrate deeply into material often well-chosen. The story "Here's Something You Won't Put in a Book," which starts out promisingly with a picture of the distress caused to a simple family by their discovery that a sophisticated, friendly novelist has put them into one of his stories, is made curiously trivial by a spectacular, melodramatic ending. Mr. Strong repeatedly takes this easy way out, repeatedly gives his stories a slick and dexterous twist, so that after murmuring once or twice "Unusual," one begins to murmur "I thought as much."

It seems idle to expect at the moment short stories, even when they are "long short stories," to have the emotional, psychological or physical dimensions of, say, *The Jolly Corner* or *Barbara of the House of Grebe*, or *The Secret Sharer*. Perhaps we would hardly know what to do with them if we got them; and Miss Bowen, Mr. Pritchett and others have shown how impressive the application of wit and sensibility to a deliberately restricted piece of "material" can be. But it seems possible that the most promising source of development for the short story is offered by those writers whose starting-point is a lyrical or visionary impulse, from which their stories are elaborated; such writers are Miss Welty and Mr. Jones (and to them may be added Miss Mary Lavin, whose *Tales from Bective Bridge* has a similar distinction). Their approach is a dangerous one, and it is well that they are gifted with humour; the poetic short story is capable of any amount of fake, and already present-day literary journals usually have a bogus example or two as a matter of course; and it must be added that even the best of poetic short stories are almost always difficult to read.

Nevertheless it is a delight to turn to *The Wide Net* and *The Water Music*; one is at once, in either of them, in a new world of observation. One feels a certain distrust at the easy-going commonplace of Mr. Strong's descriptions:

> On a background that in some places was the colour of a wet lead roof, and in others a livid orange, great shapes of cloud, blue, dove-grey, and black moved restlessly. Over the valley a veritable tower of cloud continued to pile itself up into a solid mass. Smaller fragments from time to time clung to its edges, or broke swiftly from it. . . . A cold breeze came up towards him from the valley, as if all the air there was trying to get away before that huge, imminent bulk of cloud came down; and the whole earth seemed to be crouching, eyes half shut with terror, in anticipation of the terrific flash that should let loose the storm.

Miss Welty is at once more daring and more convincing:

> . . . Afterwards there was the strange drugged fall of snow. When the sun rose the air broke into a thousand prisms as close as the flash-and-turn of gulls' wings. For a long time afterwards it was so clear that in the evening the little companion-star to Sirius could be seen plainly in the heavens by travellers who took their way by night, and Venus shone in the daytime in all its course through the new transparency of the sky.

So is Mr. Jones:

> Two brilliant hills stood on the coast, with the river swollen between them carefully swallowing the sea. Over the fields of one were spread the shadows of the clouds with the slow wind peeling at them, skinning slowly back off the grasses their dark membrane of shadow, but the sea-thorns were plastered flat and brown in a bush-crust against the round rock of the other, caking its bareness, although a red tree grew on the curve of its only field. A burning sun poured out of the sky on the thick liquid of the sea, and on the ripples of the eating river, and on the shore-pool with its darn of groundwind, and on the sea-sand, and the timber, and the flesh.

Though there is much variety in Miss Welty's book, it is carefully unified in atmosphere; the whole book is centred on one locality—Natchez, in the "deep South," during the last century—and each story adds to the others. Historical characters appear in at least two of them; only one of these, the naturalist Audubon, will be well known to English readers, but a glance at the *Dictionary of American Biography* proves, as one suspects, that others are also real. In an odd way this makes the stories—whose incidents are wholly imaginary—doubly moving; it is a beautiful poetic moment when the flight of the heron unites for a brief fraction of time the gaze and attention of the naturalist, the evangelist and the outlaw, in the story "A Still Moment"; and there is a similar beauty in "First Love," where the fugitive meetings of Burr and Blennerhassett are watched by the deaf Negro boot-boy. (The sense of "talk" in this story, which is wholly without dialogue, is a remarkable achievement.) So powerful is the evocation of these vague historical figures that the idea of "real" people invades in some way stories which appear to be wholly "fictitious": one is left wondering if the story "Asphodel"—one of the best in the book, and brilliant in its angle of presentation—is not likewise a conjecture about the past.

Mr. Jones's stories bubble over with life and humour and observation; they too are unified, but less by place (though they are all very Welsh) than by his insistent vision of ugliness replacing some possible beauty. This ugliness he can present as terrible, pathetic, or comic, as he chooses; it is terrible in "The Wanderer," pathetic in "Wat Pantathro," comic in "Bowen, Morgan and Williams." His comedy is of the kind that makes one laugh aloud—"Price-Parry" and "The Last Will" are extremely funny—but it is also clearly part of his range, and not a gift separated from his other gifts. His more fable-like stories, such as "The Apple Tree" and "The Four-Loaded Man," demand several readings, but seem to do so legitimately.

HENRY REED

AMERICA AND THE IMMIGRANT

Foreign Influences in American Life. *Humphrey Milford. Princeton University Press.* 20s.

At least in part, the origin and growth of the United States is the story of a great process of migration and assimilation which began in the seventeenth century and is only just reaching its end. From the colonial period onwards, American institutions, customs, social relationships and culture have been profoundly affected by alien influences. Perhaps these have operated from a distance, as ideas work through the instrument of books, or through physical contact, as groups of Irish or Italian or German immigrants have sought to work themselves into the fabric of American society, or through the deliberate imitation of admired models in other continents. But whatever the form foreign influence has taken, America, as a growing society, has been ready and able to translate from the beliefs and arts of other peoples anything that it found suitable or advantageous to the advancement of its own. Even where the flow of forty million immigrants has thrown up elements difficult to assimilate, the reaction has been more than negative. The problem could not be ignored; it inevitably produced a new policy, or attitude, or organisation to meet the threat which the novel idea or the unwelcome immigrant seemed to offer.

This, of course, is a vast problem, and the essays in this scholarly symposium are naturally confined to a number of specific topics. There are eight papers in all, which, with excellent critical biographies, were prepared for a course at

TIME'S
WINGED
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By ERNEST THURTLE

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Princeton in 1942-43. Of the first three, which deal with the social problems arising from the impact of different groups of immigrants on America during the nineteenth century, that by David F. Bowers, the editor, is the most brilliant though it is also the most severely academic. His essay is intended as an introduction to the series, and is a discussion of the method and scope of the course. The fourth essay is an analysis of the American economic ethic. Frank D. Graham traces the Calvinist heritage of New England against the changing social conditions of the United States. Locke, the Physiocrats, Smith, Ricardo and Marx have each left their reflection in American economic thought and life. They have not yet, according to Mr. Graham, been properly assimilated. The reason for the continued friction of economic philosophies is not hard to find. American society is still immature, it still contains social and race conflicts which cannot be rationalised into a single *Weltanschauung*, and, therefore, different groups still cling to imported doctrines which best justify their own position.

It is quite a common fallacy that the immigrant has been a radical factor in American politics. Discussing this, Oscar Handlin shows that the immigrant has largely been a tool of machine politics. His political illiteracy, his seclusion into national groups dependent on the immigrant press for news, his interest in the politics of his homeland rather than in questions of manifest destiny or soft money, the influence of clericalism, the attachment to the familiar customs of his own people as a defence against the strange, confusing ways of Chicago or Cleveland: these made him—if not his children—conservative. Perhaps the most interesting part of Mr. Handlin's essay is his analysis of anti-immigration movements. The three most outstanding examples, the Know-Nothings of 1850, the Workingman's Party in the California of 1873, and the post-1918 development of the Ku Klux Klan, had each an ulterior origin which had little to do with immigration. Each arose at a moment of social crisis: in 1850 the impetus of humanitarian reforms had upset the balance of American society and precipitated sectional divisions; in 1873 the exhaustion of the mining frontier necessitated a radical change in the economy of California; the Klan arose from the post-war depression. In all three the immigrants were a convenient scapegoat.

Then follows a paper on foreign influences in American art, accompanied by about thirty photographs. This essay is admirably linked to the sociological analysis of the other contributions, emphasising the reasons why Americans accepted some and rejected other art forms. There are, for example, excellent explanations of the enthusiasm for neo-classical architecture and for the Düsseldorf and Munich painting schools.

R. P. Blackmuir has written on the literary expatriate. Taking Eliot and Henry James as his examples for our day—as he takes Hawthorne in an earlier period—he argues that expatriation

> is a natural consequence of living in a country which does not have a great cultural capital and in a world where the cultural, political and economic capitals are not the same. [Thus] the inevitable difficulties of the artist in maintaining his attachments to the institutions of such a world.

The search of James and Eliot for the strength and solidity of old institutions was a personal dramatisation of their dissent from a country where society is still new and unstable, where institutions are still fluid, where culture, politics and economics are still unbalanced. They are, in fact, only one further example of the American attempt to grapple with the Old World.

The last of these essays deals with Hegel, Darwin and Dewey's pragmatism. In all, they form an admirable introduction to their subject.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

ABORIGINES

Maria Murder and Suicide. By VERRIER ELWIN. *Oxford University Press.* 15s.

Fortunes of Primitive Tribes. By D. N. MAJUMDAR. **The Gondwana and the Gonds.** By INDRAJIT SINGH. *Lucknow. The Universal Publishers.* 12 *Rs each.*

These three books dealing with Indian aboriginal tribes are all attractive specimens of functionalist field-work at its best—vivid, realistic and humane. The Hill Marias or Merrias of Bastar State were once famous for ritual murders inspired by a fertility cult. Mr. Elwin describes these simple and lovable people well—their ancestor cult, their carved menhirs, and their daily round of life. His main theme is the prevalence among a kindly and gentle people of a high incidence of murders and suicides, as compared with other tribes on the same cultural level. The commonest motives are sexual jealousy and resentment or shame caused by public rebuke. Only one case occurred of a private murder designed to fertilise the fields. Mr. Elwin, with some support from experienced magistrates, believes that our legal procedure and our methods of punishment do more harm than good in dealing with these primitive people. He pleads that if we must imprison aborigines for long periods, it should be not in a gaol but in a camp, where they could lead a more natural life, with dances and other tribal recreations and some opportunity for carrying out the rites of expiation for their crimes which the ancestors expect. Prison discipline makes the aboriginal servile. "His spirit should be re-created, not broken."

Deeply interesting is the explanation Mr. Elwin suggests for the prevalence of crimes due to emotional distress among the Maria. They have lost an institution which other Gond tribes retain—the common dormitory in which adolescents of both sexes live, work, play and sleep together for some years before marriage. In these they learn to adjust their social and sexual relationships easily and happily and are cured of jealous or possessive attitudes. This same subject is discussed by Mr. Singh. His study of the Gonds is valuable throughout on the economic side, but especially for his description of the democratic discipline of such a dormitory under elected leaders of both sexes. There is a good deal of sexual freedom, though some restrictions are observed: after several trials a happy and permanent intimacy ends in marriage. Each sex is trained in courtesy and impartial helpfulness towards the other. Apart from games and dances, the young people are organised as a working team, and like the Consomols in Russian villages give their services to help the sick or aged members of the tribe.

Dr. Majumdar's book contains two notable studies of aboriginals in the United Provinces. The Korwas, a tribe of hunters, akin to the Mundas, are sinking rapidly into decay. Not only are they abjectly poor, but they are losing their zest in life and now rarely perform their traditional dances. The Forestry Administration had to prohibit their practice of burning down patches of the forest in succession for tillage, but it has failed in any constructive policy to help them towards an alternative way of life. In the States, however, they still retain their pride and a measure of prosperity. His account of the Khasas is particularly interesting, since it contains a full study of polyandry and group marriage in action. Dr. Majumdar examines all the usual explanations and discusses the statistical evidence with a salutary scepticism. He suggests that the practice may survive because the joint household of brothers with one wife (or occasionally two) succeeds in preserving its ancestral fields undivided.

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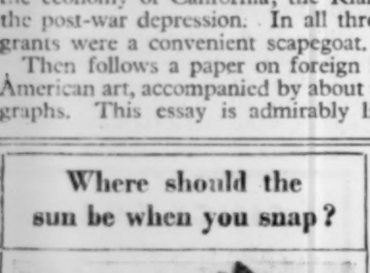

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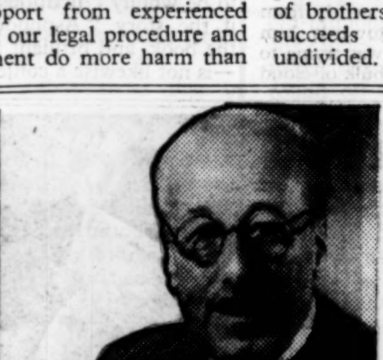

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reedom Was Flesh and Blood. By JOSE ANTONIO DE AGUIRRE. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

The Basques are a small people; partly for that eason they are one of the few genuine democracies n the world. There are few enough of them to now each other and to elect leaders on their merits. hey are singularly united; almost all of them are atholics, and they are proud of a long tradition of reedom for which they have fought in unity. Sr. guirre was President of the Basque country during he Civil War. His book begins with the German ombing of Guernica. It is still difficult to recall ithout bitterness how British Conservative papers retended that the Basques had destroyed their own acred city and, presumably, machine-gunned themselves from the air. When the country fell to Franco, guirre's friends insisted on sending him abroad. He lived with his family—a clan, since that is the basis f Basque life—in Paris. When the Germans invaded elgium, he was there with his family, visiting friends. his book describes their hair-raising adventures, midst a mass of refugees who fled before the German rmies; their hardships, escapes and, finally, how by n astonishingly bold stroke, Aguirre acquired a totally ew identity, turned himself into a citizen of Panama, nd went to Berlin where Ambassadors of several outh American States kept his secret for him and ventually got him and his wife and children to safety. he story is exciting, contains many unusual details bout Germany during the war, and is written with pleasing simplicity and sincerity. Sr. Aguirre ends is book with sensible observations about Russia, hich he thinks will achieve political freedom, and an loquent apostrophe to the U.S.A. as the hope of he Western world.

ord Shaftesbury: A Portrait. By FLORENCE HIGHAM. *Student Christian Movement Press.* 6s.

This unpretentious and readable sketch owes a ood deal, naturally, to the Hammond's *Lord Shaftesury* and to the three-volume *Life and Letters*, pubished by Edwin Hodder in 1887; less, it would ppear, to Wesley Breedy's study. In fact, it has ittle of its own to contribute that is new, unless a lightly *couleur de rose* treatment—particularly, and omewhat surprisingly, applied to Palmerston—and n emphasis on its hero's religious life, be counted as uch. But it is well-proportioned, and pleasantly ritten. As a sympathetic account of that selfless nd single-minded devotee of social reform at whose oor few causes, were they as revolting as that of the unatics of Bedlam or as apparently hopeless as that f Blake's chimney-sweeps, ever knocked in vain, it hould be very useful to the public at which it is aimed.

Week-end Competitions

No. 808

Set by Prodd

The usual prizes are offered for the most arresting and (to the layman) incomprehensible passage in any kind of genuine jargon. Slang should be avoided. The passages must be extracts from books, periodicals, textbooks or sales catalogues; and the sources must be quoted. Up to 150 words. Entries by July 31.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 805

Set by V. S. Pritchett

In one of Disraeli's novels a Catholic lady is described as receiving a guest "with extreme unction." Competitors are invited to make a similarly discreet use of religious metaphor in a brief scene of their own composition.

Report by V. S. Pritchett

Not very many entries and not the usual high standard. Is it one of the signs of the decline of religious belief that religious satire has fallen to the chestnut level? The odour of roasting chestnuts was certainly stronger, in these pages, than the discreet odours of sanctity; obviously I had hit upon a bad subject. "As the evening advanced," writes R. J. P. Hewison, "the elevation of the host became marked. . . ." Several other competitors noted this kind of elevation, and I think L. V. Upward was the neatest of them. My criticism of entries by Allan M. Laing, Little Billie, P. T. and Mrs. Derek McCartney is that they used too many instances. If one uses a bunch of phrases like "fall from grace," "holy orders," "immaculate conception," "original sin," in two or three sentences, the effect is facetious. What I wanted was the one wicked phrase that would raise the eyebrow and give the glitter of silent satisfaction to the instructed eye. The nearest though not the ideal approach to this was achieved first by Miss N. Chisholm, who depends on your ear for mispronunciations of French. She has the first prize. Sub.-Lieut. J. R. Till, has the second prize, for timing and placing his bomb, though I have more than a suspicion that I have heard this one before.

A "young professed" among other American religious attended Jubilee celebrations at the Mother House in France. When asked whether or not she would like to be placed near her compatriots in the refectory she requested instead, with becoming modesty but shocking vowel sounds, "être avec les sœurs de mon temps."

Without hesitation the Reverend Mère Générale graciously issued the instruction :—

"Mettez avec les sœurs de satan."

N. CHISHOLM

See the masses at their vespers
Gazing at the reverend face,
Eagle-eyed and ebon-bearded,
Of almighty Dr. Grace:
Never walked there to the wicket
One so priestly at his cricket.

Sweet the smack of bat on leather
On this Saxon Holy Day;
Fielders swaying in repentance
Just have strength to gasp and pray:
"Lord (if this is not high treason),
May this be his final season."

Boundaries recur like bullets—
Oh, those bounteous boundaries!
First a four and then a sixer—
Yes, by semi-Hercules!
Worshippers, long past astounding,
Praise the Lord for Grace abounding.

J. R. TILL

P. T. runs a record number of conversational sideslips together :—

"*Dear* vicar! *So* sorry to keep you waiting—you seem ordained to call just when I'm completely unfrocked! However, I've slipped this on . . . Well, I simply *had* to have something new for the Dean's wedding to-morrow. . . . The white-waistcoat effect? Yes, it makes the whole conception rather immaculate, doesn't it? And of course there's a new hat—after all, that's holy orders, though I know you husbands say it makes the churching of women an expensive affair. But I *do* think a wedding ought to be a bit of a celebration—with reservation, of course. I don't believe in all this *solemnization* of matrimony, do you? . . ."

P. T.

R. J. P. Hewison adds a surprising last sentence to an idea which many other competitors introduced :—

Old friends conversed in grunts, strangers discoursed with all the wit of the newly introduced; both kinds experienced that illusion of being cleverer and more beautiful which crowns a perfect party. Mary and William moved happily among their guests, bridging momentary silences with an introduction or a drink. As the evening advanced, the elevation of the host became more marked; but it was with pure felicity, and there was no ground for the assumption of the virgin with bobbed hair and horn-rimmed spectacles that because a bottle of brandy was in his hand, another must be under his waistcoat.

R. J. P. HEWISON

Personal

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